United Nations A/70/PV.9

General Assembly
Seventieth session

Official Records

9th plenary meeting
Saturday, 26 September 2015, 6 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Lykketoft ..... (Denmark)

The meeting was called to order at 6.05 p.m.

High-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly

Agenda items 15 and 116 (*continued*)

Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields

Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit

United Nations Summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda

Co-Chair Rasmussen: I now call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the State of Palestine.

Mr. Malki (Palestine) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I wish to align myself with previous speakers in congratulating the co-Chairs as they preside over this high-level meeting of the General Assembly. We express our respect and appreciation to all the members of the Bureau, who assisted in the great efforts that led to the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1).

The outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, entitled "The future we want", adopted in Rio de Janeiro (resolution 66/288, annex), and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) set forth some of the transcendent goals that we have established in order to achieve a world of sustainable development based on the three dimensions — economic, social and environmental — which are the basis for a peaceful, just and safe world, free of poverty.

I speak today on behalf of the people of Palestine, who have been suffering 67 years of setbacks, and of a country that has been under foreign occupation for more than 50 years. More than half of its land is under occupation, while Israel expands its settlement activities, allowing extremists to continue their outrageous activities and refusing to accept the two-State solution, in defiance of international legitimacy.

Israel, the occupying Power, has systematically destroyed Palestine's economic infrastructure through a number of measures, including what it has done to the West Bank and Gaza, to East Jerusalem, the capital of the State of Palestine, which is close to the hearts of the Palestinian people. Palestinians have been denied access except through special permits issued by the occupying Power. Its original Palestinian inhabitants are treated as if they were temporary residents.

In addition, economic and development activities have been stifled. For example, in its efforts to Judaize the area, Israel has banned all sorts of urban activities, including religious tourism. Israel is working to change the city's nature and characteristics by allowing extremists to enter the sacred places while denying ordinary Muslims the same access.

Mr. Alyemany (Yemen), Vice-President, took the Chair.

As for the Gaza Strip, Israel has waged three wars there that have resulted in total and massive destruction

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that has adversely affected every aspect of life. The unemployment and poverty levels exceed 60 and 50 per cent, respectively, as Israel has imposed a total blockade of the area for the last eight years. According to United Nations reports, the Gaza Strip will not be suitable for any human activity before 2020. The Gaza Strip needs a development miracle to restore live to it.

Turning to the West Bank, about 60 per cent of its area is closed to the Palestinian people, who are not permitted to use its natural and economic resources, such as the remaining land, gas wells and water, or to benefit from its oil and gas reserves. When the Palestinian Government attempted to carry out exploration activities, the Government of Israel sent an official letter asking it to desist, despite the fact that the Israelis have been pumping oil from many wellsin the so-called Area C for years. According to a 2013 World Bank report, the Palestinian people are being denied access to it. Allowing them to use it would improve the unemployment situation by 41 per cent, the deficit by 60 per cent.

Since the signing of the Oslo accords, Palestinians have had, according to the World Bank, some success in developing their infrastructure. However, we failed to improve our economic infrastructure because of the obstacles associated with occupation. We are still suffering from an economy that is structurally seriously deformed. For example, we cannot control our monetary and fiscal policies or arrive at a balanced budget. Nor can we issue our own currency or manage our currency in the market, as we have been forced to basically use Israeli currency since 1967. Israel imposes its fiscal policy on us, controlling taxation, spending, employment and income distribution, so that our control over this area and our economic growth is minimal. We are denied the access we need to market our products worldwide, and any negative impact on Israel's economy affects us as well. Based on a shocking Oxfam report of the last quarter of 2013, Palestinians' per capita annual income has increased to $2,093 from $2,000 since 2013, less than 0.5 per cent of that of Israeli citizens, which has increased 195 times more than that of their Palestinian counterparts. That is the result of Israel's blockade and other policies in the Gaza Strip. Needless to say, those are absolute numbers, not about purchasing power, which makes matters even worse.

The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) is trying to conduct a comprehensive economic survey of the 48 years since Israel's occupation of the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip began, so as to assess the damage that the Palestinian people have suffered as a consequence. I believe that if ESCWA succeeds in producing a report, the conclusions will shock everybody. Only then will the world understand the terrible toll that the Israeli occupation exacts from the Palestinian people, far more than the international community is giving us as a country under occupation. If the occupation ends and we finally regain access to our economic natural resources, we will have a strong and independent economy and will no longer need that international assistance.

Finally and in order to enable us to play our true role and protect our citizens, we call on the Assembly, as part of its overall interest in ensuring sustainable development, to pay greater attention to the suffering of the Palestinian people, which has been growing for seven decades.

The Acting President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now call on the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs and European Integration of the Republic of Moldova.

Ms. Gherman (Republic of Moldova): I am honoured to be in the Assembly today and to be a part of the momentous achievement, both for our countries and our Organization, that is the adoption of a global post-2015 development agenda (resolution 70/1), laying out a path to sustainable development for the next 15 years.

We are here to commit to robust action for both the present and future of our planet, with the eradication of poverty and the protection of the environment at its core. An important milestone for the fulfilment of that transformative agenda is the upcoming Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to be held in Paris in December, which will be crucial to translating the environment-related goals of our global agenda into concrete and ambitious commitments and contributions. It is not an overstatement to say that our generation is the first to seriously tackle climate change and perhaps the last to be able to do so. We must rise to the challenge and do everything in our power to preserve the environment and ensure people's well-being without leaving anyone behind.

If current trends in the degradation of the environment continue, the disintegration of nature

around the world is imminent. Current economic and consumption patterns are known to be driving humankind in the wrong direction, one that is pernicious and undesirable for us all. By any measure, reconciling our economic and environmental goals and shifting to models of sustainable development are a tremendous challenge for our times. That is why the post-2015 development agenda must be a turning point in the way we plan our economies, exploit our natural capital and build partnerships.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) must cut across all sectors and national policies and must be supplemented by clearly defined indicators, as well as adjusted to national circumstances, as the only way to make sustainability tangible in each country and region. Achieving the Goals will require a truly global partnership that goes beyond traditional models of cooperation, engaging everybody — the Government, civil society, the private sector and intergovernmental organizations — and demonstrating greater coherence and impact. Although Governments will take the lead, this is not an agenda only of or for Governments, nor is it just for the United Nations. The new Agenda should be in everyone's focus. It is our duty to inspire all stakeholders and people to take ownership of it, to assume responsibility for it and to offer support towards the attainment of its goals.

My country is committed to contributing to that global effort. Moldova is one of the countries that started early, setting up a strong legal and institutional framework for the transition to sustainable practices, and began to actively introduce innovative solutions within the key areas of its economy. During the last couple of years, the Government successfully upgraded the policy framework for the sustainable management of natural resources, including agriculture, the green economy, transportation and trade facilitation and many more areas.

In less than five years, in close partnership with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the European Union (EU), we succeeded in setting up a nationwide infrastructure for biomass energy production. We built that whole new industry from scratch in that short period of time — an industry that is thoroughly competitive, modern and sustainable and that benefits all three pillars of our development agenda: the economic, the social and the environmental. That is a vivid example of an initiative with genuine impact and is proof that we have the expertise and commitment necessary to achieve concrete results. Sustainable development is indeed tangible and can be achieved. We will continue to take long-term measures to further grow that sector.

About three years ago, the Government set up an energy efficiency fund to finance modern energy projects. The fund was designed to make long-term investments in the country's energy security while reducing its ecological footprint. The scope of our initiatives is systemic and envisions fundamental transformations of our society, in line with the country's European aspirations. The implementation of the Association Agreement with the European Union is an overarching framework that we are pursuing towards that end, and both the European Union Integration Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals in Moldova are complementary and indivisible. Standards and regulations in all spheres of life have begun to be rigorously enforced in accordance with the EU acquis and the internationally agreed norms, and we will continue to keep a watchful eye over the process. All those efforts seek to enforce the economic resilience and social cohesion of our country and to maintain the environment of stability, prosperity and peace that we long to present in our region.

The international community must step up efforts to finance the implementation of the new Agenda. Without adequate financing, the current trend towards increased inequality and the expansion of unsustainable practices at the expense of the natural environment will only intensify. That is something that we cannot afford. Official development assistance and foreign direct investment remain a critical input for developing countries and those in transition in their quest to fulfil their developent priorities and address their setbacks.

From that perspective, with a view to tackling the issue of the means of implementation, in Chisinau last February, the Government of Moldova, in partnership with the Government of Germany and in cooperation with UNDP and the International Labour Organization, hosted the high-level meeting of the Global Dialogue on Strengthening Capacities and Building Effective Institutions for the Implementation of the United Nations Post-2015 Development Agenda. Through that joint initiative we made an important contribution to the post-2015 consultations. My country stands ready to contribute to and promote that contribution in order to ensure its implementation phase.

The Global Dialogue's recommendations are pertinent and universal. Ensuring sustainability depends crucially on the character of institutions and their capacity to deliver. The core idea is that quality should prevail over quantity in everything we do: when we set up a new service, start a business or even take decisions on family planning. The implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals must be a mutual learning and sharing process. Most importantly, we must facilitate inclusive communication with all stakeholders and ensure that our societies understand what sustainable development means and relate it to their daily lives. We must foster necessary change at the level of individual behaviour. Only in that way we will cultivate a better understanding of the tasks ahead and a sense of solidarity towards our common goal and a better future.

In conclusion, allow me to share our optimism and confidence that our joint commitment to the post-2015 agenda is genuine and sincere, and that a few years from now we will return to this very Assembly and express not only our expectations and aspirations but the successful results of its implementation.

The Acting President (*spoke in Arabic*): I request my colleagues to honour the time limit so that we are able to accomplish our task in due course.

I now call on Mr. Leo Dion, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Inter-Government Relations of Papua New Guinea.

Mr. Dion (Papua New Guinea): Papua New Guinea welcomes the adoption of the post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals and acknowledges the collective efforts of all stakeholders to chart this transformative, universal development road map, which will ensure that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1) leaves no one behind.

The Millennium Development Goals galvanized the global community to take action on the key development concerns of the developing world. The 2030 Agenda is therefore a significant landmark at this point in time, when we celebrate the seventieth anniversary of the United Nations. My Government pledges its support and commitment towards the full realization of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

Papua New Guinea recognizes that this is a people-centred and transformative post-2015 development agenda that must be nationally owned and driven and supported by global partnerships. We can succeed only when countries truly own and lead their national development plans and strategies while integrating the 2030 Agenda. Consistent with our 2014 national strategy for responsible sustainable development, Papua New Guinea recognizes that a healthy, well-educated population is the underlying driver for development. The principles of responsible sustainable development mean that we do not conduct ourselves in a manner that compromises our future generations.

We must ensure that this high-level political forum adequately supports national, regional and global sustainable development goals and efforts so as to avoid the pitfalls of its predecessors.

Papua New Guinea has also invested heavily in the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals through Government interventions that have put in place national policies and plans for free basic health care and services, manage national population growth and provide access to water, sanitation, hygiene and energy resources. We are also developing an energy policy. Tuition-free education has resulted in the enrolment of an additional 2 million children in the past two years. We have laid a strong foundation that is now contributing to unprecedented economic growth, and my Government is fully committed to ensuring that we manage that transformation carefully and effectively to deliver the maximum benefit to all our citizens, while protecting our natural resources for future generations. Our challenge is to translate enhanced growth into improved human development outcomes so as to achieve our Papua New Guinea Vision 2050, with the consequent achievement of the sustainable development strategies.

We, the people of the Pacific island countries, are pleased with the inclusion of Sustainable Development Goal 13, on climate change, and Sustainable Development Goal 14, on the conservation and sustainable use of the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development. For the Pacific island countries, individually as well as collectively, having the ability to successfully achieve the Sustainable Development Goals depends largely on the effective and sustainable management of our natural environment and natural resources. Climate change is here. Even with the current average global warming temperature of less than 1° C, Pacific island States have already been dealing with serious consequences. The

recent Pacific Islands Leaders Forum, held in Papua New Guinea, reiterated the concern that climate change remains the single greatest threat to the livelihood, security and well-being of the peoples of the Pacific.

The Declaration on Climate Change Action, adopted by the Forty-sixth Pacific Islands Leaders Forum, expressed the following points, among others. First, we expect an ambitious and legally binding climate agreement to be adopted at the twenty-first Conference of Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to be held in Paris in December. Secondly, we urge that there be recognition of the special circumstances and vulnerability of small island developing States, particularly those in the Pacific, and of the least developed countries. Thirdly, we agree that an increase of 1.5°C in the global temperature would severely exacerbate the particular challenges facing the most vulnerable small island States of the Pacific and that all efforts be made to stay within the global temperature goals. Fourthly, we support the inclusion in the Paris outcome document of stipulations on loss and damage as critical and stand-alone elements that build on the ongoing work of the Warsaw international mechanism for loss and damage associated with climate change impacts. Fifthly, we have the expectation that there be access to financial resources to support climate change action and resilience in vulnerable developing countries. Sixthly, we recognize the impact of climate change on women, young people, the elderly, the disabled, indigenous peoples and other vulnerable and marginalized groups. We must acknowledge their contributions to the effective implementation of the Paris outcome.

Papua New Guinea has set in place the necessary foundation, and using the combined lessons learned from the Millennium Development Goals and the past 40 years as a country with economic opportunities, we most certainly welcome the Sustainable Development Goals and pledge our commitment to achieving better results.

The Acting President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now call on the Deputy Prime Minister of the Czech Republic.

Mr. Bělobrádek (Czech Republic): The Czech Republic welcomes the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its high degree of ambition in seeking the coveted transformation that would strike a balance between the further development of humankind and our planet's natural limits. At this time, we are seeing the results of and capitalizing on the formidable institutional and human commitments that have been required in recent years for us to work together in order to arrive at a common vision of a better and fairer world where no one stands on the periphery.

The very process of plotting that collective path has not been easy. Needless to say, the Czech Republic had and continues to have its own priorities and expectations, expectations that have largely been met to our satisfaction in the outcome document. We welcome and applaud the fact that a horizontal approach has been successfully applied to what, until recently, was barely conceivable, and that from now on, for all of us, the concept of sustainable development will be synonymous with the balanced implementation of its three dimensions — economic, environmental and social with the active participation of all stakeholders, including civil society.

The Czech Republic views as another breakthrough the union of two previously parallel processes: the process based on the Millennium Development Goals and the process that follows on the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development. I am confident that the connection will lead to a better quality of development and help to establish a balance between socioeconomic growth, on the one hand, and the sustainable use of natural resources and environmental protection, on the other. In the wake of the successful third International Conference on Financing for Development, in Addis Ababa in July, we can rightly celebrate another milestone in multilateralism.

However, with the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, we are now embarking on an equally important stage. In its implementation, which must definitely confirm and deliver on the historical shift achieved, a great deal of responsibility and thought are required. I believe that it would be right and appropriate on this occasion to remind ourselves of this. Beyond the pivotal importance of actively involving Governments at all levels in implementing the new Agenda, we also need to place emphasis on delivering an efficient funding mechanism, especially in the context of the broader application of innovative forms of aid and private-sector development in general.

Another equally important step, which is also a major challenge and opportunity for the Economic and Social Council and the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, will be the introduction

of effective monitoring, which should guarantee the continuous tracking of progress in pursuing the Sustainable Development Goals and help to ensure the timely identification of any potential pitfalls requiring extra attention in the next 15 years, including through the sharing of good practices and the exchange of experiences among the States Members of the United Nations

If elected this year to the Economic and Social Council for the 2016-2018 session, the Czech Republic will do its utmost to contribute to this effort. The availability of reliable data will be a key factor in monitoring at the national level. The Czech Republic is confident that its statistical service is a high quality, independent source of information. It is also well aware of the need to strengthen public-administration capacity to collect and analyse data in those countries where such a need has been identified.

Holistic solutions delivering the essential responses required for multifaceted problems sometimes require complex and technically advanced procedures. The Czech Republic supports the idea of identifying such procedures through projects that address global themes that, from a domestic perspective, need to be incorporated into existing systems for the financing and evaluation of the science. Beyond the technical dimension of science, the humanities and social sciences also have a role to play in that they can provide solutions to current social ills. Competent analyses and scientific outputs are instrumental in laying the groundwork for addressing the repercussions of today's demographic trends, such as migration and climate change.

From a national point of view, we look at the Sustainable Development Goals not only as externally originating change but also as an opportunity to forge appropriate links between global efforts aimed at sustainable development and the trends we are witnessing in the Czech Republic, which can bridge national and global levels of sustainable development. The Czech Republic has already made progress by creating a Government council for sustainable development, which seeks to strike a balance among the three dimensions of sustainable development. As the council is an advisory body to Government as a whole, it provides a platform for discussions on interministerial issues and cross-cutting agendas. The very existence of the council highlights the importance the Czech Republic attaches to the sustainable development Agenda. One of the ways to implement the Sustainable Development Goals at the national level is through the Czech Republic strategic framework for sustainable development, which is currently being updated.

The Czech Republic is confident that by adopting the 2030 Agenda, we are embarking on a new era of sustainable development that will eradicate poverty and promote education, shared prosperity, peace and stability. Nevertheless, if these global objectives are to be achieved, our focus must remain on respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, the equal participation of women in society, functional and effective institutions, the rule of law, good governance and a corruption-free environment. The efforts associated with the delivery of such basic requirements guarantee that the real successes of the new Agenda will be visible not only on paper, but in the everyday lives of millions of people calling for change.

The Acting President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

Mr. Mammadyarov (Azerbaijan): It was a historic moment when we gathered to take a decision to adopt a comprehensive, far-reaching and people-centred set of universal and transformative goals. I commend the General Assembly on the successful conclusion of its negotiations on the post-2015 development agenda.

As one of the world's fastest-growing economies, Azerbaijan has achieved impressive results in the field of development. In the first half of 2015, despite the global economic and financial crises, Azerbaijan registered economic growth of 5.7 per cent,and growth in the non-oil sector of 9.2 per cent. Azerbaijan has managed to become one of the key players in the global market in energy infrastructure projects through, for example, the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil pipeline, the construction of the Trans-Anatolian and Trans-Adriatic natural gas pipelines and the Southern Gas Corridor, which will connect the energy pipeline networks of Azerbaijan, Georgia, Turkey, Greece, Albania and Italy. Azerbaijan has also initiated strategic transport infrastructure projects such as the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway project, which will connect the rail networks of Azerbaijan, Georgia and Turkey, and the new Baku International Sea Trade Port, which will provide a short connection between East and West, thereby reviving the Asian Silk Road.

With a view to delivering equitable and efficient services to its citizens, my country established the State

Agency for Public Service and Social Innovations. The Agency already covers most of the goals on the new Sustainable Development Agenda, adopted by this Summit yesterday (resolution 70/1). The success of this innovative model has been widely recognized. Indeed, the model received the United Nations Public Service Award in 2015.

Our people are committed to making a contribution to international development. The leading non-governmental organization in Azerbaijan, the Heydar Aliyev Foundation, has implemented numerous social, humanitarian and development projects in a number of countries. We attach primary importance to the promotion of intercultural dialogue, religious tolerance and understanding among peoples. Azerbaijan will host the seventh Global Forum of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations in 2016. We are proud that the first European Games were held this year in Azerbaijan and that, in 2017, Azerbaijan will host the Islamic Solidarity Games.

Regrettably, the challenges to peace and security were and are one of the impediments to regional sustainable development and cooperation. The ongoing military occupation by neighbouring Armenia of almost 20 per cent of the territory of Azerbaijan, in blatant violation of international law and the relevant resolutions of the Security Council, continues to represent a serious threat to international peace and security. In brazen violation of basic human rights conventions, Armenia is carrying out ethnic cleansing against almost a million Azerbaijani in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan and in Armenia itself. As a result, they became refugees and internally displaced. Putting an end to the occupation of the territories of Azerbaijan and ensuring the return of forcibly displaced persons to their homes is an essential element of the implementation of the Agenda for Sustainable Development in our region.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate that my country is committed to sustainable development and to international efforts undertaken towards that end.

The Acting President (*spoke in Arabic*): I thank the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan for having abided by the time limit.

I no call on the Director-General of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Sierra Leone.

Mr. Bangali (Sierra Leone): I am making this statement on behalf of the Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Mr. Samura Kamara, who, unfortunately, could not be with us today.

I have the honour, on behalf of my country, Sierra Leone, to participate in this historic summit for the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

At the outset, allow me to acknowledge with sincere thanks and appreciation the leadership role of the outgoing President of the General Assembly, His Excellency Mr. Sam Kahamba Kutesa, for successfully guiding the process.

Sierra Leone endorses the adoption of the post-2015 development Agenda.

The United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development held in Rio three years ago was a critical step forward towards building the world that we hope for. In this regard, we should now commit ourselves to translating into reality the ambitious Goals set out in Agenda 2030. We must strive to transform our world through a new development trajectory and take concrete, bold and transformative steps to end extreme poverty, which, as aptly described in the 2030 Agenda, is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development.

We note the important progress made in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The major challenge in ensuring the success of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is working out a proactive and effective implementation strategy that must include, first, a seamless transition between the MDGs and the SDGs and, secondly, the development of new approaches that include issues of multi-stakeholder ownership, institutional partnerships, universality, empirical analysis and knowledge-sharing. We must therefore take the gaps and challenges in the implementation of the MDGs as our takeoff point in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

To this end, we should also ensure that the new development paradigm adequately addresses the needs, challenges and development priorities of every Member State, and we must remain steadfast and resolute in our pledge to leave no one behind.

Many countries in Africa, particularly fragile and conflict-affected countries, were confronted with

challenges beyond their capacity in the achievement of the MDGs. These challenges remain enormous, ranging from poor infrastructure to weak institutions, low human capital and lack of adequate and predictable financing, despite the noticeable strides made in promoting democracy and good governance. This new Agenda therefore presents a unique opportunity to not only ensure that the critical issues confronting Africa and other parts of the world, namely, poverty, hunger, youth unemployment, social inequality and the impact of climate change, to name but a few, are effectively addressed, b ıt also to find integrated and innovative solutions to address the special needs of the conflict-affected, fragile and least developed countries.

Sierra Leone therefore welcomes the recognition of the need to mobilize adequate resources for conflict-affected countries. We underscore the significance of a long-term, stable and predictable flow of financing in order to reduce the inherent problems that are associated with uncertain or short-term financial flows. This is why we endorse the new financing framework, which requires public finance, policies and regulatory frameworks, unlocking the transformative potential of people and the private sector, and incentivizing changes in consumption, production and investment patterns to support sustainable development.

We firmly support the call to tackle climate change and urge all Member States and other stakeholders to maintain the momentum in collaboratively mobilizing the political will to achieve a meaningful, universal climate change agreement in Paris in December this year.

Official development assistance (ODA) remains one of the main sources of international financing for many developing countries. Sierra Leone strongly believes that ODA is essential as a catalyst for development, including meeting the unfinished business of the MDGs and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. But ODA must be 'smart': it must focus on 'aid orphans', and due consideration should be given to conflict-affected countries within the spirit of the New Deal, which, we believe, should be mainstreamed within the United Nations system.

The 17 SDGs and 169 targets are indivisible, which simply means that success in all of them is required for a truly transformative world that can better the lives and dignity of the human race.

Sierra Leone welcomes Goal 16 of the SDGs, which underscores the importance and interlinkages between peace, security, stability, human rights and the rule of law as necessary conditions for development.

Sierra Leone will continue to build on the remarkable progress made in political stability, which is critical to development. We have put people at the centre of development and will in that regard continue to place emphasis on the protection of the basic rights of our people. We will continue to adopt measures to build on the progress made in addressing the root causes of conflict. We have laid the foundation for medium- and long-term national development and will continue to build on them.

Building peace, security and consolidating good-governance reforms will continue to be among our priorities. These provide us the appropriate healing therapy for a country that has emerged from a massively devastating conflict and now Ebola.

We have moved from a country on the agenda of the Security Council to a nation that is a storehouse of lessons on how to successfully move from war to peace and development. Notwithstanding the unprecedented Ebola virus outbreak, which had a grave negative impact on our socioeconomic development, we are resolute and committed to implementing our agenda for prosperity, which is tailored to most of the Goals of the 2030 Agenda, together with the post-Ebola recovery strategy.

We wish to commend and express our special thanks to the United Nations and the international community for their support in ending the epidemic as well as in pursuing our post-Ebola recovery plan.

To conclude, amid our current challenges, we will continue to build on the progress made in addressing key development priorities, particularly in the areas of gender equality and women's empowerment, youth unemployment, the management of natural resources, food security, the effective delivery of public services and robust private-sector-led growth that would translate into more tangible peaceful dividends. We therefore look forward to meaningful partnerships as well as a structured and forward-looking successful implementation of the SDGs within the next 15 years. Together we can build a better world for succeeding generations.

The Acting President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now call on the Minister of International Cooperation and Development of the United Arab Emirates.

Sheikha Al-Qasimi (United Arab Emirates) (*spoke in Arabic*): I am delighted to be here today to mark a major milestone for sustainable development.

After years of preparations that included intergovernmental negotiations and extensive consultations, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1) is proof of our commitment to a better world.

Building on the success of the Millennium Development Goals, the set of Sustainable Development Goals reflects a new global consensus on how the world should look in 15 years' time: a world free of poverty; a world with educated and healthy citizens; peaceful and economically prosperous societies; and clean environment and habitats. The 2030 development Agenda speaks to all of us, in all parts of the world.

The United Arab Emirates is pleased to participate in the achievement of the set of 17 goals and 169 targets. Access to clean energy, sufficient and affordable food, quality education and health care, sustainable economic growth, healthy ecosystems and increased resource efficiencies: all of these issues resonate strongly with the United Arab Emirates.

The United Arab Emirates has transformed its economy into a highly advanced and knowledge-based economy in a single generation, and it is continuing to develop rapidly. We have a strong commitment to sustainable development, and we can show success stories in many sectors.

First, we have set ourselves a national goal of increasing the use of clean energy in our energy mix through the deployment of solar energy and safe nuclear power. We are diversifying our economy through innovation, research and development, and investment in human capital. The United Arab Emirates supports the equal participation of women in all aspects of society. We are protecting and fostering terrestrial and marine biodiversity by establishing protected areas and increasing the sustainable use of water resources. We are pioneering sustainable urban communities, as represented by Masdar City, the world's leading low-carbon urban development. And we are committed to combating climate change through active participation in international climate change negotiations.

These achievements have been driven by visionary leadership and effective policies, including the United Arab Emirates Green Growth and innovation strategies, and initiatives undertaken across our country. We believe that the Sustainable Development Goals and targets will continue to reinforce our strenuous efforts and pave the way for our achievement of sustainable development.

Although still a relatively young and developing country, the United Arab Emirates has become the world's most generous donor in the past two consecutive years, providing official development assistance above the target of 0.7 per cent of gross national income, and provides extensive support to fellow developing countries.

Our contribution has already supported a number of core areas of the 2030 development agenda, including infrastructure development, the provision of health care and renewable-energy and critical humanitarian assistance.

The United Arab Emirates is not only a major donor but a major convener of dialogues on sustainability, including the annual Abu Dhabi sustainability week, the Abu Dhabi preparatory meeting for Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's Climate Summit, in 2014, and Expo 2020 Dubai, which will champion sustainable development. We are also the proud host country of the International Renewable Energy Agency, which is the world's hub on renewable energy. The United Arab Emirates will continue to back these forums to foster partnerships and deliver practical solutions.

The essential yet ambitious scope of the Sustainable Development Goals will require substantial resources. The international community must look beyond traditional methods of resource mobilization. We must forge new partnerships and be innovative in order to access previously untapped sources of development finance and investment. It is not just about raising more resources, but also about addressing causes of market failures, creating an enabling environment for trade and commerce by reducing investment risks, and increasing opportunities for public-private partnerships.

The United Arab Emirates is committed to implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in a manner consistent with its international obligations and commitments, and stands ready to work with all parties concerned.

I would like to conclude by expressing our pledge to leave no one behind and to shift the world onto a sustainable and resilient path. Let us join efforts in this critical journey to 2030 and beyond.

The Acting President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs of New Zealand.

Mr. McCully (New Zealand): New Zealand welcomes the ambition contained in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and we support the substance of the Goals. Indeed, it would be hard not to. As a specific country that places a high priority on the needs of small island developing States, New Zealand regards the achievement of the SDGs as a matter of fundamental importance, not just a matter of statistical interest.

The key question that flows from their adoption is not whether the 17 Goals contained are worthy objectives, but how we ensure that their adoption makes a difference. If all nations and organizations do the hard work and make the difficult calls, that will make the SDGs attainable. The SDGs set out development goals for the next 15 years. It is sobering to ask just how well we performed in relation to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and what lessons we need to learn if we are to be more successful in relation to these successes.

The primary focus of my country is on its neighbourhood, the Pacific, where 60 per cent of our development budget is spent. Of the 14 States in the Pacific Islands Forum, two achieved all of the MDGs, three achieved more than half, and several nations achieved none. I hope that most would agree that we collectively need to do better in the Pacific and elsewhere with the SDGs than we did with the MDGs.

If the SDGs are to be attained, we need to learn some lessons about past practice and make challenging decisions about the way forward. Yes, sustainable development requires resources to be made available, but it also requires accountability and discipline. It requires Governments and partners to make wise decisions about priorities. Governments and partners will need to prioritize the developments that have the potential to be game-changers and then move heaven and earth to make sure that some of these projects are actually delivered.

A key reason for the failure to achieve a better scorecard with the MDGs has been a failure to prioritize developments with the greatest potential. Another reason has been the propensity of the international development community to mistake activity for achievement. Of course, we need good process to manage the expenditure of development funding, but that is no excuse for valuable development resources being squandered in lengthy bureaucratic processes. That is a particular problem for us in the Pacific.

The major international financing institutions have developed rule books and processes that might be very appropriate for projects involving billions or hundred of millions of dollars. But I come from a region where most of our neighbours have populations of tens or a few hundreds of thousands. Key development projects in the Pacific region often require a few million or a few tens of millions of dollars. The application of processes and rules designed for much larger projects in much larger countries have the very simple consequence of adding significant extra cost and long, often interminable delays. I take this opportunity today to say to the major financing institutions, as I have been saying to them directly for far too many years now, that they serve our region poorly when they persist with processes and procedures that add so significantly to the cost and the timetables of important projects.

I have said that achieving sustainable development requires focus and discipline to prioritize activities that had the capacity to be game-changing. Today, I want to talk briefly about two of the SDGs that are game-changers in our region — energy, specifically renewable energy, and fisheries, one being the biggest cost and the other being the largest economic asset in our region.

In common with most small island developing States, the nations of the Pacific have been heavily dependent upon diesel to generate electricity, which comes at a great cost. The cost of diesel in the Pacific islands is more than double the cost in New York. About one third of the total import bill of these countries and about 10 per cent of their gross domestic product is consumed by the cost of diesel. In short, shifting Pacific nations from dependence on expensive diesel and providing access to renewable energy, especially solar power, is a real game-changer in our region.

For the past two years, New Zealand has been leading a programme to shift Pacific neighbours from diesel-generated electricity to renewable energy. In early 2013, we co-hosted a conference, in partnership

with the European Union, involving all of the Pacific nations and the major development partners. We are now implementing road maps in each country, and we are making good progress.

For most of the smallest islands, the change is truly transformational. In the Tokelau islands, we have moved from 100 per cent dependence on diesel-generated electricity to 100 per cent solar-generated renewable electricity. Earlier this year, we celebrated conversion of all the islands in the northern Cooks from total dependence on fossil fuels to 100 per cent solar power. Significant progress has been made on the main island of the southern Cooks, Rarotonga, and all of the smaller southern islands will be fully resourced with solar power in the coming months.

In Tuvalu, the four outer islands will be shifted from diesel-powered to solar-powered electricity by December of this year. And we are making major headway with renewables in Samoa, Tonga, Niue, Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands. Many of the skills and lessons we have learned are transferable, and in more recent times we have been pleased to be involved in assisting SIDS in the Caribbean, and others like the Comoro Islands, in their efforts to shift to renewable energy.

Another big game-changer for our region is the tuna fishery, its largest economic asset. So we welcome the adoption of the SDG for oceans. The Pacific tuna fishery is the only truly healthy tuna fishery left on the planet. Keeping it healthy and ensuring that its economic benefits flow more substantially to its owners are critical tasks for the next decade. In each of the last three years, the market values of the tuna taken from the Pacific zones has declined from $3.9 billion to $3.4 billion to $3.1 billion. Yet in each of those years we have seen greater tonnages taken from the zones. That is simply not a sustainable path.

New Zealand is therefore committed to investing significantly in building the fisheries management capacity of the region and encouraging initiatives to move Pacific nations up the value chain through greater processing and employment opportunities in the region. We need better cooperation among nations on surveillance in order to stamp out illegal fisheries and the underreporting of catch. We need greater cooperation to protect the health of the world's oceans.

New Zealand welcomes the adoption of the SDGs, but we know that it marks the beginning, not the end, of the process. Ahead lies the challenging task of attempting to meet these Goals. If we are to succeed in a way that the MDGs did not, we will need to learn from the significant lessons of the recent past. These are lessons about hard work and difficult decisions, about choosing the right priorities and focusing on practical outcomes. Above all, they are about strong partnerships that deliver positive and timely results. In that respect, the Assembly may be assured that New Zealand will play its full part.

The Acting President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of the Republic of Rwanda.

Mrs. Mushikiwabo (Rwanda): Global development is a shared responsibility. This week's adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) marks a major step towards addressing the greatest challenges facing our world. The goals are ambitious, but so are the aspirations of billions of people, who are keen to improve their lives, see an end to inequality and conflict, and safeguard the health of our planet.

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were adopted as my country, Rwanda, emerged from a devastating period following the genocide. While we were engaged in figuring out the most appropriate path to renewal, we found that the MDGs were aligned with our national vision and the expectations of our citizens, and we linked our efforts to a much wider context. This allowed Rwanda to meet most of the targets and build strong productive partnerships.

In making the transition from the MDGs to the SDGs, we will have to take into account what we have learned in the past 15 years, in order to address the complex challenges ahead. First, we must recognize the added value the Goals bring to existing development plans. Secondly, we must commit to making the best use of both domestic resources and development partnerships, a big part of which is ensuring accountability to ourselves and our partners for results. The third lesson — and the best determinant of success — is citizen ownership and involvement at every step in the processes of planning and implementation. Plans and resources are essential, but getting people on board and engaged is the most effective way to achieve the transformation. Every country will have to figure out the forms of governance and democratic participation needed for that to happen. In addition, the next 15 years present an opportunity to focus more on key underlying

factors that will help us to achieve the most impact, including the promotion of gender equality, greater involvement of the private sector and the use of science and technology, particularly Internet broadband.

Finally, in line with my country's commitment to the development process, we are honoured to be the host of the new Sustainable Development Goals Centre for Africa, which will strengthen partnerships within the continent, between the continent and the wider world, and with all stakeholders. That will allow us to make the most of this new chapter in international collaboration. We look forward to playing our part in building a safer and more prosperous and equitable world.

The Acting President (*spoke in Arabic*): The Assembly will now hear a statement by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the State of Eritrea.

Mr. Saleh (Eritrea): My Government welcomes the outcome document, entitled "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" (resolution 70/1), and is pleased to join the community of nations in adopting it. Its goals and targets fit well with Eritrea's self-reliance policy and development agenda. It clearly reflects Eritrea's commitment to eradicate poverty in all its forms and dimensions among our people. Since Eritrea's independence in 1991, the Government and the people have adopted a people-centred, inclusive, pro-poor and internally driven social, economic and political development agenda.

In spite of the hostile acts of some Governments, an extensive disinformation campaign, the imposition of unjust sanctions and the occupation of some of its sovereign territory, Eritrea, as a result of the political commitment of the leadership and the people's involvement, has been able to register commendable results in almost all of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Eritrea's achievements have been commended by most of the United Nations agencies and its development partners. Eritrea achieved MDGs 4, 5 and 6, namely, reduction in child mortality, in maternal mortality and in HIV/AIDS, malaria and other communicable diseases, early in 2013, ahead of the target date.

Today, Eritrea is an oasis of peace in the vulnerable Horn of Africa and the Red Sea region. Ensuring food security, developing infrastructure, capacity-building and providing efficient and effective social services are its major activities. Under the motto "Education for all", education in Eritrea is universal and free from kindergarten to the tertiary level. The agenda of empowerment for women is on track; equal pay for equal work and women's rights to inheritance and to own property are guaranteed by law. Female genital mutilation has been criminalized. The National Union of Eritrean Women, a grass-roots civil-society organization with over 400,000 members, is active all over the country. In regard to the environment, extensive and coordinated grass-roots forestation and water-conservation activities are taking place.

Eritrea once again welcomes the adoption of the 2030 Agenda. Its implementation will definitely consolidate Eritrea's achievements under the MDGs. The Sustainable Development Goals appropriately emphasize the centrality of poverty eradication. Rest assured that, as with the MDGs, the people and the Government of Eritrea are determined to achieve the Goals and targets set in the 2030 Agenda, which will be integrated into all their development policies and programmes. Eritrea is also committed to promoting investment, cooperation and engagement with its development partners.

I have heard speaker after speaker emphasize the need to bring about a transformative change all over the world and to pledge that "no one will be left behind". Let all of us respect the letter and spirit of that noble pledge. It must also be underlined that there cannot be sustainable development without peace, and there cannot be peace without sustainable development. It is therefore high time for the United Nations and all of us to shoulder our responsibilities and to urge those countries that do not respect international law and their treaty obligations to do so. No nation, big or small, should be allowed to occupy the sovereign territory of another State. Moreover, politically motivated and unjust sanctions definitely have a negative impact on the social and economic welfare of the people, particularly women and children. They must be immediately and unconditionally lifted. Once again, no nation or people should be left behind.

The Acting President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now call on the the Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Yemen.

Mr. Abdullah (Yemen) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to express our appreciation to the United Nations and all the States that have been assisting my country, Yemen, in overcoming the current

challenges. We would like to extend our thanks to our brothers in the Gulf Cooperation Council, particularly the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, which promptly set about forming a coalition with a view to saving Yemen.

The year 2015 is of critical importance given the transition to the post-2015 international development agenda. In the General Assembly, we are working to implement the recently adopted 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, with its three pillars — economic, social and environmental. It is an agenda that caters to the ambitions of everyone all over the globe. We welcome the considerable efforts made to arrive at the outcome document, which aims to eradicate poverty and hunger and to help us create a world characterized by human solidarity, with a view to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

Despite the initial gains made in my country in the context of some of the MDGs over the past 15 years, the absence of development planning and vision during the 33 years when former President Abdullah Saleh was in power, in addition to the various armed conflicts and terrorist incidents that have occurred over the past 50 years, forced our people to lead a life devoid of any kind of development. At the end of last year, Houthi militias and president Saleh carried out an armed coup d'état, and in less than one year all our development gains were erased.

I would like here to extend our many thanks to Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and to his Special Adviser on Yemen as well as to the United Nations system as a whole and the international community for having stood by the legitimate Yemeni Government and its people so as to achieve peace, security and stability. This involved a number of resolutions adopted by the Security Council, the most recent of which is resolution 2216 (2015), which reflects the priority we attach to achieving development and making up for the losses we sustained as a result of the conflict and armed violence.

We would like to draw the attention of the international community to the conflicts that are raging in certain countries, with a view to achieving peace, security, reconstruction and institution-building, so that the peoples of those countries will be able to relaunch their development process for a better future.

The eradication of poverty and hunger is a main target of the Summit. Despite the decrease in the number of poor people and the measures taken to combat poverty, most of the poor live in rural areas, and Governments cannot extricate them from the trap of poverty and malnutrition. These problems were intensified as a result of the armed coup d'état and aggression, as well as the killing of and unjustifiable violence against civilians, as is happening in Yemen. Armed militias are not abiding by the resolutions of the United Nations. We would like to emphasize the need to work with the international community and the United Nations to stimulate the agricultural and industrial sectors and promote rural development as well as combat malnutrition, with a view to achieving security and stability.

Yemen has many friends; many pledges and promises were made to support it and its development. We hope that this will continue, particularly as the infrastructure has been destroyed. This year has special importance for us, given that the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change is to be held in Paris in December. Climate change is among the most serious challenges facing the world. It threatens development efforts, the combat against poverty, agriculture and various other sectors of developing countries, the least developed countries in particular. They threaten the survival of many countries, particularly the least developed countries that are suffering from armed conflict. We hope that the Paris Conference will devise clear-cut procedures that will protect our national resources and ecological diversity and ward off the looming dangers that constitute a major barrier to the achievement of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

We reiterate the need to take measures aimed at changing our behaviour as individuals, families, businesses and Governments in a manner that ensures sustainable patterns of consumption and production. We welcome the outcome document of the third International Conference on Financing for Development, held last July in Addis Ababa. The outcomes of the Conference are very important, and States, including those of the Group of 77 and China, must implement their commitments to promote concrete results in terms of development.

We emphasize the pivotal role undertaken by the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development. As the least developed countries were not able to achieve the MDGs so as to ensure the well-being of their peoples, we would emphasize the need to provide them support in the areas of production growth, education, training and technology by the end of this year.

I wish the Summit every success.

The Acting President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Investment Promotion of the Federal Republic of Somalia.

Mr. Omer (Somalia): The Government of the Federal Republic of Somalia is proud to have been involved in what has been a truly inclusive and transparent process during the negotiations on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). These Goals will now succeed the Millennium Development Goals.

It is crucial that we complete what we as individual nations ambitiously started in order to create a more equitable, secure and prosperous world for each and every human with whom we share the planet today and for those born tomorrow.

While it is impossible for all Member States to get what they want, I am confident that the Sustainable Development Goals provide a strong framework for the greatest challenges that the world faces collectively today. The challenges of today are ones that require common action through partnership in order to ensure security, positive progress and prosperity for all mankind.

It is not possible, in a globalized age, to insulate one's nation from overarching global issues such as climate change, terrorism and poverty without developing solutions and partnerships to initiate, manage and sustain the progress we require at a global level.

Our message to all delegations gathered here during this historic Summit, during the seventieth anniversary of the United Nations, is that all partnerships, North-South, South-South, business, Government and civil society, must all be challenged to complement one another. This is the only way fully to utilize their abundant resources, in order to provide collective solutions to the implementation of the fundamental targets to be met by 2030. There cannot be finger-pointing 15 years from now because we failed to work together, simply because the lives of billions of people depend on the effective outcome of our commitment and cooperation. The child born at this hour will be 15 years old by 2030. We must think now how that precious child will evaluate our efforts. Will we have honoured our promises to that child or will we have failed him? That is the stark and simple choice we face collectively with every target we set ourselves under the Sustainable Development Goals.

Somalia, as a nation that has exited civil war and that is now on the road to strong recovery, has argued for and continues to underline the importance of supporting post-conflict nations in their journeys to peace, stability and economic recovery. The way out of violence and political misunderstanding is a commitment to justice, humanity and good governance. All those universal goals are the prerequisites for a stable world and a conducive environment for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

We are certain that this is not the end of the discussions or debates. We must now take the bold steps required to bring what is beautifully written on paper to life. The real challenge begins once we leave New York and return to our countries.

Somalia is ready to work with each and every partner and will embrace new ones in order to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, so that in the future we as a nation can contribute even further to the stability, progress and prosperity of our world. The Somali people have a rich story to share and much to contribute to the global community. Many in the world came to know us in our previous chapter during conflict, in which we were survivors. Today, we embark on this current chapter, in which we will be known as builders, as we work towards a stable and peaceful society and region in the Horn of Africa and the wider world. Now, may the Sustainable Development Goals that we have come to sign act as the pen and ensure that in our nation's next chapter we will be creators, innovators and, finally, sustainers contributing to the world in ways that bring peace, harmony and prosperity to our fellow man.

The Acting President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now call on the Secretary for Relations with States of the Holy See.

Archbishop Gallagher (Holy See): The Holy See wishes to congratulate the international community for adopting the post-2015 development Agenda. Indeed, the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the Summit is an important sign of hope.

The Holy See appreciates the Agenda's focus on the eradication of poverty and hunger, based on the centrality of the human person and the related

commitment to ensure that no one is excluded. Yesterday, Pope Francis reminded the Assembly that economic and social exclusion is a complete denial of human fraternity and a grave offence against human rights and the environment. The 2030 Agenda should be built, he said, on the foundations of a right understanding of universal fraternity and respect for the sacredness of every human life, of every man and every woman, the poor, the elderly, children, the infirm, the unborn, the unemployed, the abandoned.

This common home of all men and women must also be built, he said, on the understanding of a certain sacredness of created nature. In this way, the pillars of integral human development — housing, dignified and properly remunerated employment, adequate food and drinking water; religious freedom and, more generally, spiritual freedom and education — have a common foundation — the right to life and, more generally, what we could call the right to the existence of human nature itself. The 2030 Agenda for Development (resolution 70/1) can be effective and practical if it provides immediate access, on the part of all, to essential material goods and respect for people's freedom to attain essential spiritual goods.

That poverty has many forms means that sustainable development can neither be conceived nor measured in mere economic and statistical terms. Various aspects of the 2030 Agenda pertain to human activity as such, and for that reason they entail an ethical dimension with attention to spiritual, moral and religious values, namely those categories which "transcend the language of mathematics and biology, and take us to the heart of what is human" (see *Laudato si'*). For our own sake and that of future generations, we need models of development that do not compromise human dignity and the health of our environment. In the words of Pope Francis,

> "[W]e must avoid every temptation to fall into a declarationist nominalism which would assuage our consciences ... We need to ensure that our institutions are truly effective in the struggle against all these scourges" (*A/70/PV.3, p. 4*).

It is widely recognized that achieving each of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals and the many related targeted targets is a formidable challenge. We must avoid diverting precious resources from the pursuit of the most fundamental goals. In that regard, the Holy See has already made its reservations clearly known and is on record concerning certain targets as well as expressions.

In adopting the Agenda, the international community has chosen solidarity over egoism — solidarity with the excluded of today, solidarity with the poor of tomorrow, solidarity with future generations. The family, the natural and fundamental unit of society, is the primary agent of sustainable development and therefore the model of communion and solidarity among nations and international institutions. A shared concern for the family and its members is a sure contributor to poverty reduction, better outcomes for children, equality between girls and boys and women and men, improved work-family rest balance and stronger intra- and inter-generational bonds. We would do well not to forget the ample evidence that family-friendly policies, including respect for religion and the right of parents to educate their children, contribute effectively to the achievement of development goals, including the cultivation of peaceful societies. Solidarity and cooperation are not mere sentiments; for them to be genuine they must move us to action.

Therefore, our choice must mean the determination to mobilize the resources needed to achieve our commitment. It must mean building capacities in poorer countries at the earliest stages to ensure success. It must mean sharing with the poor countries the technological know-how that can help them to emancipate their people from extreme poverty without placing heavy costs on the developed countries. It must mean, on the part of all, justice, the rule of law, a strong commitment to fighting corruption and a genuine spirit of service for the sake of the common good.

Consequently, as we commit to the task of achieving the Goals of the 2030 Agenda, we must start with the conviction of our common origin, our history, our common destiny. We are a single human family in need of one another, with shared responsibilities and with a common destiny inseparably linked to our planet, our common home, for which we all must care.

I would like to conclude by paraphrasing a passage from the Pastoral Constitution of the Second Vatican Council, *Gaudium et Spes*. The joys and the hopes, the grief and the anguish of the people of our time, especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted, these are the joys and hopes, the grief and anguish of us all. Indeed, nothing genuinely human must ever fail to raise an echo in our hearts.

The Acting President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Marshall Islands.

Mr. DeBrum (Marshall Islands): I have the honour to convey warm greetings on behalf of His Excellency Christopher Loeak, President of the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Marshallese people. The Marshall Islands is proud to join in adopting the United Nations post-2015 development agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

We have set our collective sights high so as to continue to move the world out of poverty and towards a sustainable planet. We have directed our collective sights across the full range of development challenges and out to 2030. We have pushed ourselves beyond the usual strain of superficial rhetoric and set specific benchmarks to measure progress and address gaps. Our celebration, however, should be brief. It is now time to implement.

In the Republic of the Marshall Islands, as with many of our Pacific neighbours, oceans define our identity and future. Achieving the oceans SDG will depend closely not only on partnerships but on renewed political will, in particular on the part of distant fishing nations to put aside their immediate economic self-interests and make tough choices to ensure that the world has a sustainable food source and that small island nations realize a much stronger benefit and participation with regard to our own resource. The parties to the Nauru Agreement havecommitted to advancing the world's largest certified sustainable tuna fishery. Our success will depend closely on other nations and the private sector working as true partners — with us, not against us.

It is right that the SDGs also focus on climate change and sustainable energy as urgent priorities. Climate-driven impacts can easily erase any potential development gains and are an unrivalled long-term economic and security disaster. As a low-lying island nation whose long-term future is entirely at risk to rising seas, it is critical that we mark progress toward emerging resiliency with wider planning. We must also measure global progress toward stronger, renewable and efficient energy that will achieve decarbonization and delink growth from pollution. Ocean thermal energy conversion remains a powerful goal of self-sufficiency and renewable energy for my country, and all nations must further define their own ambitious paths.

The SDGs have also rightfully incorporated gender as an important benchmark. Although women play a powerful role in our traditional culture, too often the gender gap has persisted despite specific policies and good intentions.

It is also critical that the achievement of the SDGs not only rest with national Governments at the United Nations but include the full range of actors, including the private sector and our regional partners. In this regard, and following the Trans-Pacific Partnership Framework, it is important to fully recognize the participation of Taiwan in the implementation of the SDGs.

For a small island nation and also a large ocean country, it is imperative that our statistics capacity receive targeted and immediate support and that we devise a tailored national SDG strategy in which we move forward first with our strongest and most deserving priorities. At no point were our previous strategies closely aligned. Our national policies, bilateral foreign assistance, the regional Pacific plan, the United Nations strategy for small island nations and the Miliennium Development Goals were never mapped out together. It is little wonder that limited progress was achieved.

Today we all have the opportunity to design things differently. We must forge closer links between the SDGs and regional platforms as well as with our own improved national strategic plan, which utilizes the recent boost in national fisheries income as a targeted opportunity to invest in the SDGs and in our future. We need the full commitment of our close and traditional partners as well as the genuine leadership of non-traditional sources to match our own strong, national commitment.

Today is only the first step of many needed to forge a closer link between local communities and global aspirations.

The Acting President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now call on the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs and Head of the Delegation of the Republic of Nicaragua.

Mrs. Rubiales de Chamorro (Nicaragua) (*spoke in Spanish*): I convey fraternal greetings from our President, Commander Daniel Ortega Saavedra, to this historic United Nations Summit to adopt the document to transform our world – the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1). This underscores the

importance of renewing our commitment to the peoples of the world and to Mother Earth for a world at peace, free of poverty and evil.

This is a crucial moment, when the evaluation and culmination of the Millennium Development Goals that we agreed upon 15 years ago coincide with the seventieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations, whose purpose is peace and the social and economic development of our peoples. During those 70 years, the world has continued to witness conflicts that clearly disrupt international peace and security with wars of aggression, military interventions, occupation of sovereign countries, and policies aimed at changing regimes. That has undermined and decreased the development achieved in States that had brought security and prosperity to their peoples. It has created the conditions for the spread of violent extremism and international terrorism to the point of controlling territories, leading to the current crisis of millions of refugees whose numbers are increasing daily. How can we explain to these millions of men, women and children who have nothing to eat, who lack shelter, education and health that there is money for military expenses, for war and intervention but that there are no budgets for development projects or for our people to live well and in harmony with Mother Earth?

We are among the countries that have achieved a reduction in poverty and hunger. However, we have been unable to fully achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) or all the strategic targets at a global level. Doing so is key for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, whose implementation must be governed by the principle of shared but differentiated responsibilities if we are to change the current economic order, establish a new economic and financial model and create new patterns of production and consumption consistent with living sustainably.

Our President describes the current economic model as one that encourages economic development. He says that, our struggle to achieve sustainable development notwithstanding, what has prevailed and continues to be practised is unsustainable development, which gives rise to inequality and poverty. That is why our major challenge must be to implement the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), with the priority of eradicating poverty and inequality by 2030. Pope Francis inspired us with his presence at the United Nations and his contribution of the encyclical entitled *Laudato Si'*. We espouse those same sentiments. Everyone should be mindful of the encyclical when implementing the Agenda.

To achieve the outstanding MDGs and to implement the SDGs, it is vital that developing countries have access to technological and financial resources. They must be able to build their capacities and to enjoy the political space to enable them to promote their national policies and sovereignty. Nicaragua has made progress in meeting its commitments to the MDGs and, today, is closer to achieving all of them.

Our Christian and socialist model of solidarity, under the political guidance of our President, Commander Daniel Ortega Saavedra, our national human development plan and the capacity for organization and mobilization of our people have been the determining factors in reducing poverty and economic and gender inequality. Nicaragua is among the leading countries of the world when it comes to the number of women in the executive branch, Parliament and municipal government, as noted by the World Economic Forum gender-gap index. Our Government believes that emphasis on the role of women is an essential factor in policies for sustainable development. These include access to land, property and loans and programmes that provide capital for rural and urban women, such as Zero Hunger and Zero Usury.

As part of our commitment, and with a view to having a positive impact on the new Agenda, we would like to propose to the international community an international campaign on access to safe surgery, without which more deaths occur every year — chiefly among the poorest and most vulnerable peoples of the world — than are caused by malaria, tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS combined.

The people of Nicaragua regard the implementation of the 2030 as an opportunity for the international community to renew and strengthen its commitment and solidarity with the peoples of the world by driving human development, while promoting climatic and social justice, peace and harmony, and respect for territorial integrity and the self-determination of peoples, and ensuring the survival of the human race and the rights of Mother Earth.

The Acting President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now call on the Head of Delegation of the Syrian Arab Republic.

Mr. Ja'afari (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to extend my

country's thanks to the co-Chairs of the Summit for their work in organizing it. The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic welcomes the adoption of the post-2015 development Agenda, which is an ambitious road map for achieving sustainable development in its three dimensions — economic, social and environmental — for all peoples of the world.

In regard to the Agenda, Syria emphasizes that the developed countries have a commitment and historical responsibility to support the national efforts of developing countries to achieve development. In so doing, they must abide by the Charter of the United Nations and respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Member States. It is on that basis that we should all work globally to achieve sustainable development.

The Agenda incorporates an understanding of the most important dimensions and reasons for the deterioration of economic, social and environmental conditions — migration and the lack of stability in the Middle East — which are the result of occupation, invasion and terrorism. Situated in the heart of the region, Syria is suffering, for the fourth straight year, from an unprecedented wave of extremism and terrorism controlled by outsiders. It is a terrorism that burns everything around it and wipes out the development achievements of the Syrian people, a terrorism that has been attempting to destroy the economy of Syria and its infrastructure, while systematically stealing its natural resources. The terrorists continue to threaten the security and safety of the people, to nullify the role and energies of young people and women and to ruin the Syrian civilization.

The current wave of terrorism would not have happened had it not been for the erroneous policies of some and the lack of insight of others. Events in Syria and throughout the region can be explained by the fact that some States have become involved in fuelling crises to achieve their unethical political interests, while others have turned a blind eye. The failure to participate in combating the spread of terrorism and extremism in the region has meant that terrorism and extremism have now spread throughout the world. Terrorists now use modern information and communications technology and receive financial assistance. Clearly, what is happening in Syria is a wave of terrorism and extremism led not only by terrorists, extremists and brokers but also by well-known international and regional intelligence services.

Everyone knows where the fatwas of terrorism are issued — the fatwas that incite Syrians to rise against each other. Everyone knows who gives weapons and logistical support and monthly salaries to foreign mercenaries and terrorists. Everyone knows who facilitates the transborder crossings of mercenaries and terrorists into Syria to attack and destroy its institutions and to threaten the very security and safety of its citizens. Everyone makes fun of and mocks those who promise paradise to the followers who cross the borders with the terrorists.

The ultimate goal of the terrorists is to destroy Syria as a citadel of moderation, tolerance and peaceful coexistence. We are currently witnessing a conflict between moderation and radicalism, between civilization/development and backwardness, and between stability and anarchy. Day in and day out, we witness killings and acts of destruction carried out by Daesh and the Al-Nusra Front as well as other terrorist organizations in Syria, which are, abominably, termed the moderate armed opposition, which surrendered their weapons to the terrorist Al-Nusra Front, as noted today by the Pentagon's Central Command.

The armed moderate opposition has daily bombarded civilians in hundreds of towns and villages with thousands of rockets and mortar shells, killing thousands and destroying public and private property. As the Assembly is aware, Syrian and Iraqi oil is being stolen by terrorists and sold to European Union States through Turkish brokers. In addition, everyone here is familiar with the destruction of the Syrian and Iraqi world cultural heritage, as was seen in Palmyra, Mosul and Nimrud.

Given the extent to which we have suffered from terrorism, we strongly support the reference to combating terrorism as a priority to achieve sustainable development. Combating terrorism should take place on the basis of respect for the Charter of the United Nations and the principles of international law; the implementation of the relevant resolutions on the combat against terrorism; identifying and holding accountable the Governments, organizations and individuals that have helped terrorists; providing immediate international cooperation to combat terrorism, economically, militarily and politically; and preventing terrorists from benefiting from modern technology in order to proliferate their terrorist ideology and finance their operations.

The other barrier to sustainable development in our region is the Israeli occupation, which has continued for more than six decades and enjoys the protection of some influential Powers in this Organization, which protects them from any accountability vis-à-vis violations and crimes against Palestinians, and Syrians in the Golan. That has brought the process of achieving peace, stability, security and development in the region to a standstill.

Despite our agreements, the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development in 2012 and the adoption of dozens of resolutions emphasizing the need for sanctions, which distort amicable relations among States, to be eradicated, it continues to spread because certain influential forces and Powers depend on these economic sanctions. They paid no heed to the living conditions or the development of peoples. These illegal measures have twice the impact when they are imposed on poor developing countries and those suffering from terrorism, conflicts, natural disasters and occupation.

Some States have imposed unilateral economic sanctions against important Syrian sectors such as trade, financing, energy and investment. That has harmed Syria considerably, undermined its development, adversely affected the living conditions and well-being of Syrians and caused a major shortage of relief and medical materials. The Syrians consider their exceptional conditions that require international solidarity and support for their country and its institutions. They do not believe that they should be punished economically in a manner that adds to the burden imposed by terrorism, which has forced many of our people to flee the country.

In conclusion, the phenomenon of migration is a result of the erroneous approach adopted by some States against some developing countries: the lack of seriousness in supporting developing countries economically and the participation by some States in fuelling crises and interfering in the stability of other States and in the options and choices of their peoples, as well as intervention in their internal affairs, as in my country; occupation, as is happening in Palestine; invasion, as happened in Iraq and Libya; and the imposition of unilateral economic sanctions, as in Cuba, Iran, Belarus, the Sudan and Venezuela. Everyone knows the results of that approach: unprecedented migration.

Addressing the refugee crisis cannot be resolved by collecting money here. Rather, the parties I mentioned must cease supporting terrorism and stop exporting terrorists and mercenaries from all over the world into my country.

The Acting President: I would like to urge all delegations to abide by the time limit. There are 17 delegations waiting to speak. I plead with all representatives to abide by that time limit.

I now call on the Head of Delegation of the Republic of Guinea-Bissau.

Mr. Da Gama (Guinea-Bissau): Allow me, on behalf of the President of the Republic of Guinea-Bissau, Mr. José Mário Vaz — who, unfortunately, is not able to be present here as we adopt the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development because of his personal engagement to ensure that a new, stable Government is put in place as soon as possible — to convey our appreciation to the Secretary-General for having organized this Summit and also to congratulate the co-Chairs for conducting the work of the Summit.

Seventy years after the foundation of the United Nations, no anniversary celebration could be better than this event, at which we are all realizing that it is time to look at development issues from a different perspective, by taking everyone on board. Poverty and hunger cannot be tolerated in a world where so many great technological achievements have been made. It could not be more timely to recognize that the achievement of the three pillars of sustainable development, the economic, social and environmental, is possible only if we do so together by leaving no one behind and taking into account all relevant principles, such as those of common but differentiated responsibilities.

Fifteen years ago, world leaders met in this same Hall and agreed on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to be achieved by 2015. Some countries, especially least developed countries such as my own, Guinea-Bissau, were not able to accomplish those Goals, for a multitude of reasons. Their fragility, which makes them more prone to internal and external shocks, and their structural challenges made it more difficult for them to eradicate extreme poverty and thereby achieve these Goals.

This time we believe that we can commit to the SDGs with a different outlook and assume the responsibilities needed to give our countries a better

chance for the achievement of the 17 Goals built on the foundation of the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, "The future we want". We would essentially consider them to be a continuation of the unaccomplished MDGs but with more precise implementation strategies. Developed countries, our partners, should do their part and honour their commitments with respect to official development assistance and other funds for development, such as the implementation of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the third International Conference on Financing for Development, as well as all the outcomes of other major international conferences in the economic, social and environmental fields.

With the help of those more capable, it is time for all of us to make a greater effort to do more for our populations by recognizing where we are in our development and to create concrete strategies for achieving the new Goals. In this respect, Guinea-Bissau is aware of how far behind it stands. The Government, in a bid to achieve political stability through inclusive development and the preservation of biodiversity, aims through its development strategy plan for 2015-2025, known as "Terra Ranka", to convert three decades of poverty and instability into positive transformation within 10 years. This 10-year vision, in which the SDGs are well incorporated, is therefore an agenda for change, focusing on a multitude of areas such as peace and governance, biodiversity and the sustainable use of natural resources, urban infrastructure development, human development, the business environment and private sector development.

In Guinea-Bissau, which has long been battling instability, we strongly believe that, to achieve this development vision, a major reform of the justice, defence and security sectors, as well as the modernization of the State institutions, is needed. This will help us to strengthen our democracy and social cohesion, with a view to maintaining sustainable peace, promoting inclusive economic growth and lifting our people out of poverty. In this regard, we call upon our development partners and friends to help in the stabilization of Guinea-Bissau and to support the implementation of the strategic plan my country presented to the donor round table held in Brussels last March by honouring the pledges made.

Just as we all agree that there is a need for a more just world, we should also agree that there is an urgent need to narrow the gap between rich and poor and to help countries like ours reach a higher level of development. However, the question remains: how can that be achieved without proper assistance and commitment from our partners?

How can a least developed country (LDC) in Africa, like Guinea-Bissau with a population of 1.7 million and a poverty rate of 69.3 per cent, do it without proper support and assistance? How can we do it without proper official development assistance and foreign direct investment inflows? How can we do it without proper infrastructure and basic services such as energy so that we can fit into today's world of technology? How can we have food security without proper agricultural technologies for better production while protecting our lands from degradation? How can we do it when the access to international markets for our mostly agricultural products is so difficult? How can we manage our debts with the conditions imposed by the international financial institutions that are supposed to help us?

The truth is that we cannot do it alone. Our partners are needed on board, with full and honest commitment. As His Holiness Pope Francis said yesterday in this Hall, these partnerships are needed to make the SDGs a reality and create a just world where peace and sustainable development for all is possible (see A/70/PV.3).

Peace and development go hand in hand. They complement each other. My country, Guinea-Bissau, was able to demonstrate the fact that with stability and good governance some improvement is possible. After the 2014 election, through its economic reform strategy, the Government was able to improve life for the population and raise the gross domestic product by more than 5 per cent in a period of one year. South-South and triangular cooperation are also essential for developing countries, especially for LDCs, owing to the fact that it is easier for developing countries to understand the many constraints faced by LDCs. At the same time, we should emphasize that, in no way should it be taken as a substitute for North-South cooperation, which is pivotal for the sustainable development of our countries.

It is important, however, to note that each country is responsible for its own development and has the right to set its development strategy in accordance with its national priorities and level of development. To this end, coordination between national authorities and among

donors is crucial to ensure better implementation and a global partnership for development.

The role of women is very important in all our societies and countries. Women should be respected as equal partners in the development of our countries, especially in the course of implementing the new Agenda. We should all commit to creating inclusive societies where women are empowered to have the same rights as men.

The recognized vulnerability of the small island developing States (SIDS) must be taken fully into account in the new Agenda, and a strong commitment to implementing the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway is the right way to start. As we aim for a just world socioeconomically, we should promote a safe planet for future generations of humankind by finding solutions to mitigate the adverse impact of climate change. In many countries, including my own, sea-level rise and coastal erosion is already a reality. For SIDS, this reality is a matter of survival. The very existence of many islands and their people is threatened. Ocean acidification and overfishing are destroying our oceans and threatening the future of our planet. Islands feel the first impact, but in the end we will all pay a high price with the destruction of the life-support system of our planet.

We should strive to cut greenhouse gas emissions and promote adequate funding for adaptation, resilience and the mitigation of climate change while looking for greater commitment from our partners in the upcoming twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to be held in Paris later this year, where nations should take full responsibility for a cleaner and safer planet for present and future generations.

Finally, many commitments have been made in this Hall, and we have all drawn the same conclusion and recognized that there is still much to be done. As we accept the new challenge of the 2030 Agenda, we should try harder and do better going forward so that we do not fail the very poor of this world again. We must bring hope to our children's generation with real sustainable development for all.

The Acting President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now call the Head of Delegation of the Commonwealth of Dominica.

Mr. Henderson (Dominica): The development challenges faced by developing countries, and especially small island developing States (SIDS), find their roots in historical global inequities that persist today. The lopsided governance of international institutions and the failure of the industrialized countries to take on their responsibilities for climate change continue to be major obstacles to our development. Therefore, in order for us to achieve our lofty Sustainable Development Goals, we must commit to re-engineering the governance of our multilateral institutions and recognizing our common but differentiated responsibilities to create equity, fairness, justice, peace and security for our people and for our environment. That must begin with the industrialized countries accepting and shouldering their responsibilities for placing our planet in peril.

Climate change is a real and present, not a future, danger to the continued existence of those of us who call small islands our homes. Therefore, it is pointless for us to discuss Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for a future that may not exist for many small and low-lying States. The Government of Dominica therefore calls on all Member States to commit to reducing and replacing the activities that contribute to climate change at the next Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Paris in December.

A little over four weeks ago, on 27 August, the people of Dominica were reminded of the reality of climate change when, over a 16-hour period, 18 inches of rain from tropical storm Erika left 13 confirmed dead, while 17 people are still missing. Erika also wreaked havoc on our infrastructure, to the tune of almost half a billion dollars. In less than 24 hours, Erika wiped out 82 per cent of our country's gross domestic product. That means that funds that were allocated to lifting more of our people out of poverty and to continuing on a development path to allow our country to meet its SDGs will now have to be redirected towards rebuilding and creating greater resilience to protect our people and our island from other devastating hydrometeorological events caused by climate change. The Government and the people of Dominica express our gratitude to all the countries and organizations that came to our aid during our time of need.

We are gratified to see several of our priority issues reflected in the post-2015 development agenda: the need to build resilience, conserve and sustainably use oceans and seas, food security, water and sanitation, affordable, reliable and sustainable energy, crime, climate change and sustainable consumption and production. Dominica

is committed to seeing this Agenda fully realized and therefore will continue to actively do its part within the limits of its resources. But we also recognize that the means of implementation are critical to the realization of the 17 SDGs. The Addis Ababa Action Agenda provides a mechanism for developing countries to meet the SDGs. One area that must be addressed expeditiously is the financing challenge faced by middle-income countries such as Dominica. In order for those of us in SIDS to take advantage of such development financing, we must be recognized and treated as a special category by multilateral partners and organizations.

The measure of per capita income distorts the true situation in most SIDS. The vulnerability of middle-income SIDS to climate-change events and their level of indebtedness must also be considered qualifying criteria for official development assistance and concessionary financing. Dominica therefore reiterates the call in clause 62 of the Addis Accord that specifies "the need to devise methodologies to better account for the complex and diverse realities of middle-income countries".

Mr. Tommo Monthe (Cameroon), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The Government of Dominica is convinced that the SDGs are achievable. However, a strong commitment to protecting our planet within a framework that is fair and equitable is critical and must be buttressed by durable and genuine partnerships, with mutual respect between and among States. Development partners, especially intergovernmental agencies and financial institutions, must become more responsive to the needs of SIDS. Their interventions, therefore, must reflect the aspirations of the people and be informed by genuine participation and local ownership. The traditional North-South relationship must be reset to embrace collaboration and cooperation rather than prescription and dictation. That new paradigm should be enhanced by South-South and triangular cooperation in order to solve some of the greatest challenges of our time.

Development is about people. Let us therefore take immediate action to create a better world for all our people.

The Acting President: I now call on the President of the International Olympic Committee.

Mr. Bach (International Olympic Committee): On behalf of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), I would like to congratulate the United Nations Summit on the historic adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals. My thanks go to Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, to the United Nations Group of Friends of Sport for Development and Peace and to the many Governments on all five continents that allowed the IOC to take part in the comprehensive consultations.

As a Permanent Observer to the United Nations, the IOC not only has actively accompanied but wholeheartedly supports the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda (resolution 70/10. I would like to thank Member States for recognizing the contribution of sport to sustainable development and to advancing progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals.

The new Agenda specifically acknowledges

> "the growing contribution of sport to the realization of development and peace in its promotion of tolerance and respect and the contributions it makes to the empowerment of women and of young people, individuals and communities as well as to health, education and social inclusion objectives" (*resolution 70/1, para. 37*).

In other words, sport is a natural partner when it comes to realizing the 2030 Development Agenda. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon put it best when he described Olympic principles as "United Nations principles". The IOC shares the important goal of the peaceful development of humanity, Given our shared values of tolerance, solidarity and peace, we are committed to contributing to the realization of the Sustainable Development Goals. Let us continually strengthen our partnership to work together for a better world.

Shaping the future of humankind is the overarching theme of this United Nations Summit. For the international community, the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda addresses future social and economic progress. For the Olympic Movement, the Olympic Agenda 2020 addresses progress with regard to sustainability, credibility and youth. Therefore, with this Olympic Agenda 2020, the IOC is absolutely in line with the objectives of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Sport can help to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals in very concrete ways. Its global reach and universality make sport a low-cost, high-impact tool to support all countries — big or small, rich or poor, North or South. The cross-cutting nature of

sport allows it to address several of the Goals at the same time.

Goal 3 calls for the attainment of healthy lifestyles: sport has an essential role in combating non-communicable diseases, which are all too often caused by physical inactivity and poor nutrition. Regular exercise is one of the best ways to prevent illness and disease; hence, sport helps to significantly reduce health-care costs and increase productivity. Sport and education go hand in hand: sport and physical education programmes promote school attendance and help to improve learning performance. Research demonstrates that sport improves learning by deepening concentration capabilities. That is key to achieving Goal 4, on quality education.

Sport is a powerful platform for fostering gender equality and empowering women and girls, as called for in Goal 5. One of the key missions of the IOC is the promotion of women in sport at all levels. Women athletes and Olympians can serve as inspirational role models for young girls around the world. Just last month, the IOC implemented the gender-balanced sports programme for the Buenos Aires 2018 Youth Olympic Games. For the first time, there will be absolutely equal numbers of girls and boys competing at these Youth Olympic Games.

Sport is an important tool for peacebuilding and preventing conflict, thereby supporting Goal 16. Sport can promote social inclusion, build trust and foster a culture of peace between groups in conflict. Through its 206 national Olympic committees, the Olympic Movement unites all people and builds bridges between all cultures. In Olympic sport, all people are equal, regardless of their ethnicity, gender or faith — that is the Olympic spirit of unity in diversity. Another example of how sport can promote peace and inclusion occurred only last month, when the IOC recognized the national Olympic committee of South Sudan. With that recognition, we wanted to send a signal of hope to a young nation and its people. The President of the newly recognized national Olympic committee of South Sudan informed those present at the IOC ceremony: "We will arm our young people with sport, and not with guns". As a powerful and active player in civil society, Olympic sport can make a meaningful contribution to global partnerships for sustainable development, strengthening Goal 17.

A central theme of the Olympic Agenda 2020 is that progress needs cooperation. In order for sport to serve humankind, sport must engage with society. Just a year ago in Haiti, we were honoured by the presence of Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon as we opened the Sport for Hope Centre together. The Centre is a joint initiative of the IOC and key partners, including the United Nations. The Centre provides sport, health and educational activities for Haitians from all walks of life. Similarly, the IOC works in partnership with foundations and local sports associations across Africa to support a network of 52 centres in 43 countries. That has already brought sport and educational activities to more than 1 million young Africans all over the continent.

Perhaps the most prominent example of the influence of our partnership with the United Nations comes from the tradition of the Olympic Truce. The IOC is grateful that the General Assembly has supported that tradition before every Olympic Games since 1994. By adopting resolutions in the past two years, the General Assembly has acknowledged the contribution of the Olympic Games to fostering international understanding and peace. We believe that that message of our shared values of tolerance, solidarity and peace is more relevant than ever.

The International Olympic Committee is built on the belief that sport can contribute to peace and the harmonious development of humankind. Today, as the world ushers in a new era of development, we are truly honoured to be a committed partner of the United Nations in making the world a better place through sport. The United Nations and all its Member States can count on the unwavering support of the IOC to achieve that noble goal.

The Acting President: I now call on the Director-General of the International Development Law Organization.

Ms. Khan (International Development Law Organization): As the head of the only intergovernmental organization exclusively devoted to advancing the rule of law and development, I am honoured to address this historic Summit.

In a groundbreaking move, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1) has put the rule of law firmly at the heart of development. It no longer is an optional extra but is a premise without which development cannot be sustained. Goal 16 acknowledges that access to justice, the rule of law and effective, inclusive institutions are essential ingredients

of sustainable development. Clean government is as important as clean water.

But the relationship between the rule of law and the 2030 Agenda goes deeper than Goal 16. The rule of law is about equal protection, accountability and transparency. In that sense, it cuts across all the Sustainable Development Goals. Without access to justice and the rule of law, development cannot flourish, investment will not take root, the planet cannot survive, the poor cannot overcome poverty, and women cannot fight discrimination and become agents of their own destiny.

No matter where in the development spectrum a particular country stands, establishing peace, protecting the planet, eradicating poverty or encouraging economic opportunity requires good laws and regulations that are fairly administered by transparent and accountable institutions and that, first and foremost, produce fair outcomes for all.

Agenda 2030 is an inspiring document — but it will become truly transformative only when the words are converted into action. As an organization that works on the ground to enable Governments and empower people to reform laws and institutions, we are acutely aware of the challenges that face countries emerging from conflict or striving towards democracy or seeking to build their economies. In practical terms, this means drafting good constitutions, reforming laws and courts, empowering citizens, ensuring gender justice, regulating fair access to services, promoting land policies that enhance food security and fiscal regimes that encourage foreign direct investment, and so on.

Building the rule of law requires vision, time and money, but it is the soundest investment there is. The more Governments and the international community are willing to invest in it, the less they will have to scramble to address catastrophic development failures from famine to refugee crises. Building the rule of law and ensuring access to justice is more efficient than mending the broken pieces when States fail.

It is no mere coincidence that the icon for Goal 16 that the United Nations has designed, the dove of peace, is holding firmly onto the gavel of justice. The message is clear: peace, progress and sustainability are built on the foundations of justice. Justice must come first, and the International Development Law Organization will play its part in making that happen with the support of the General Assembly.

The Acting President: I now call on the Secretary-General of the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance.

Mr. Leterme (International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance): As a plan of action for people, the planet and prosperity, which seeks also to strengthen universal peace in larger freedom, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1) is an ambitious road map for change. The adoption of the Agenda is a historic pledge to eradicate poverty while at the same time reverse the tide of environmental degradation. Turning it into reality will, however, require the involvement and engagement of the people.

The International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance — International IDEA — as the sole intergovernmental organization with an exclusive mandate on democracy and electoral assistance, has advocated a democracy lens in the definition of the Agenda. Attention to the three dimensions of social, economic and environmental sustainability has guided the deliberations of Member States. In addition to them, I strongly believe that there are political dimensions essential to delivering on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). They are related to such issues as democratic accountability to citizens, country ownership, coherence across a wide range of public policies and the mobilization of the material and non-material resources necessary for turning deeds into action.

The Agenda could have been bolder in recognizing the importance of democratic governance. Its approval, however, is an impressive achievement and an example of multilateralism at its best. Let me detail three remarkable facts.

First, the Declaration underscores the importance of democracy, human rights and the rule of law for sustainable development. Secondly, the SDGs framework includes key Goals for democratic development, such as Goal 5, on gender equality; Goal 10, on reducing extreme inequality; and Goal 16, on peaceful, inclusive societies, justice and accountable institutions. Thirdly, the openness, transparency and inclusivity of the consultation process gave an unprecedented space for engagement with many actors. Those included national parliaments, civil-society organizations, academia, local actors, the private sector and other major groups. Alongside Governments, they

will all play a key role for defining actionable plans, sound public policies and development outcomes.

The extraordinary post-2015 process is not yet over. Important work on indicators has yet to be accomplished, by March 2016. A key principle in that regard will be to measure what we treasure. I urge Member States to ensure that the indicators will capture citizens' perceptions and will assess both the qualitative and quantitative dimensions of the SDGs. The biggest challenge that lies ahead of us is the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Citizens need to own sound national strategies that take all human rights fully into account. For such strategies to be truly people-centred, citizens should be given the opportunity to engage in their definition. They should also be allowed to provide feedback on their implementation.

On behalf of International IDEA, I particularly welcome the recognition of the importance of all responsible actors' accountability to citizens in achieving the Goals. Democratic accountability will indeed be a critical factor for ensuring that the translation of the Agenda into national strategies is really responsive to the needs and lives of all people. That was stressed today at a high-level side event organized by International IDEA with the Heads of State of Switzerland, Botswana and Mongolia. Member States, it was concluded, should build on the experience gained throughout the Millennium Development Goals process for further strengthening accountability mechanisms at the national and subnational levels.

We as International IDEA stand committed to facilitating experience-sharing by Member States from all regions of the world on democratic accountability in service delivery. We shall also contribute, together with the United Nations and other partners, to supporting national efforts to develop and utilize democratic accountability mechanisms for monitoring progress on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

In conclusion, let me underscore that we owe it to the next generations to act now, with democracy's empowering energy, to protect and build a better world for us all.

The Acting President: I now call on the President of the International Criminal Police Organization.

Ms. Ballestrazzi (International Criminal Police Organization) (*spoke in French*): I am speaking on behalf of the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL), which today brings together 190 States in the fight against international organized crime, I am particularly honoured to participate in this debate at the highest level of the international community.

We know today that the relationship between security and development is close but ambiguous. On the one hand, there is no development without security. When the roads are not safe, when borders are porous, when there is corruption or significant criminal trafficking, then we have major obstacles to sustainable development. On the other hand, security depends on an economic and social environment conducive to the financing of high-quality recruitment and training according to the most modern standards and salary levels that enable people to resist corruption.

How can a global police organization such as INTERPOL, with more than 100 years of experience, be a bulwark against violence, organized crime and injustice and work for dignity and equality? According to our mandate, we act first of all as a direct and immediate service with the police forces of our member States. We provide them with high-level technical assistance to help them reinforce their basic operational capacities. We help them build, deploy and maintain modern criminal databases, for example WAPIS, the West Africa Police Information System project, which aims to provide several countries of West Africa with information capacity on criminal activities.

It will also enable police forces to communicate and exchange information. That is the meaning of our motto, "Connecting police for a safer world", which also translates into the distribution of our notices. One of those notices was specifically created 10 years ago in cooperation with the United Nations in order to support the sanctions regime introduced by the Security Council. INTERPOL also provides countries with the tools for integration, sharing and pooling. If they are isolated globally, competent police forces can only be weak when it comes to fighting cross-border crime and global threats. Our regional conferences, which are held regularly, are trying to meet the need for dialogue and to define the conceptual framework and synergies among professionals who work for sovereign States but are interlinked by dint of their fight against organized crime.

As such, the activity of our seven regional bureaux is vital, because it enables INTERPOL to organize regional anti-criminal operations that bring together

several States as we fight against crime. What is the challenge that we are facing above and beyond strengthening the existing tools? States members of the General Assembly defined it when they were working on the post-2015 development goals and mentioned the word "sustainable". As we fight organized crime and terrorism, I think that sustainability will be borne up by the creation of norms, concepts and tools that are really global, truly shared and developed together on the basis of shared universal values. Our organization is proud of its activity alongside the United Nations for more than 20 years. In particular, that collaboration thrives thanks to the development of over a dozen sectoral cooperation agreements concluded with the United Nations, which are now going to be complemented by the new plan of action with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.

Criminals are perhaps organized, but they are not united. I think that, standing together, we can present an organized united front against them.

The Acting President: I now call on the Director of International Partnership and Cooperation of the International Organization for Migration.

Ms. Helke (International Organization for Migration): It is a great honour to speak to the Assembly today on behalf of my Director General, Mr. William Lacy Swing, on this momentous occasion.

As we join one another in adopting the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1), we are committing to a highly ambitious, universal agenda that will guide our efforts to achieve sustainable development over the next 15 years. The new Agenda includes many significant and critical issues that the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) did not address. For example, the 2030 Agenda highlights the positive contribution of migrants to inclusive growth and sustainable development. It recognizes the need to enhance migrants' development outcomes and to ensure that they are not left behind. That is a great achievement, and something that the International Organization for Migration (IOM) strongly applauds.

By including migration in the new Agenda, we challenge ourselves to address the causes and consequences of migration in a way that promotes dignified, orderly and safe migration for the benefit of all. I urge all Governments and stakeholders to take those commitments seriously, and I offer three points showing why it is critical to do so.

First, as the Director General has said many times before, we are in a period of the greatest human mobility in history. One in every seven people on the planet today — roughly one billion people — are migrants. Many billions more are directly affected by migration — whether as family members of migrants or as people who receive indispensable services and other support from migrants. The dimensions of today's migration mean that it is inevitable and will only continue over the lifetime of the 2030 Agenda. For example, demographic shifts and labour market transformation in both developing and developed countries will lead to an increased need to match people with jobs at all skill levels. We must therefore manage and plan for large-scale migration, recognizing that it can be a boon for development, if well managed.

Secondly, we are witnessing an unprecedented number of humanitarian crises in the world, including in Syria, Iraq, Libya, the Central African Republic and South Sudan. Ebola has impacted the economies of West Africa; climate change and extreme weather events are all factors driving migration and must be addressed. With 33.3 million people internally displaced and 16.7 million refugees, the number of people displaced by violence and conflict today in the world is the highest since the Second World War. At the same time, IOM data show that the number of migrants dying on dangerous journeys in the hope of finding better lives for themselves and their families is rising. All States have an international obligation to save the lives of those seeking help. We must address the drivers of displacement and act in concerted and coherent partnership in doing so.

Thirdly, the international community must work together to change the migration discourse to something more positive. We have watched with dismay the growing tide of anti-migrant sentiment in many parts of the world, as hearts harden towards migrants and communities begin to turn on each other. Rather than succumb to those negative perceptions, we must instead focus on what migrants contribute to their host countries, as well as their countries of origin.

For IOM, the commitments outlined in the 2030 Agenda represent critical means through which to address those challenges. Implementing the migration aspects of the new Agenda will call for the adoption of a "high-road" scenario on migration. That could encompass many different policy interventions, but should focus on best-practice measures to improve

migrant and host population well-being through safe, orderly, dignified and humane migration.

IOM stands ready to assist Governments to develop and implement such policies in the pursuit of the 2030 Agenda and a world free of poverty. We are developing a Migration Governance Index to help monitor and build capacity in the planning and implementation of Governments' migration policies, and IOM has a unique capacity to gather migration policy data from its member States, which could facilitate monitoring of the new Agenda.

Together, we can make a difference. We are here to help.

The Acting President: I now call on the Adviser to the Secretary General of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation.

Mr. Bokhari (Organization of Islamic Cooperation): I bring greetings to the President of the General Assembly from the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and its Secretary General, Mr. Iyad Ameen Madani. The OIC extends its best wishes as the United Nations embarks on the historic task of transforming the lives of billions of people by investing in sustainable development for the next 15 years.

This is a defining moment for all of us. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1) puts the people and their needs at the centre. It has rightly been called the "Agenda of the people, by the people and for the people". The OIC stands ready to work with the United Nations to ensure that our journey on the road to 2030 is successful and its gains irreversible.

The goals and objectives of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation are not different from those of the United Nations. The OIC is the second largest intergovernmental organization after the United Nations, with 57 member States spanning four continents, which means that it has almost one third of the United Nations membership. The two organizations are devoted to the cause of international peace, security and development and share diverse challenges in all domains of human endeavour.

After more than four decades of existence, the role and scope of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation has expanded from a predominantly political set of issues to include many areas relating to human development, the quality of life and the well-being of the people. The OIC of today deals with issues that include science, technology and innovation for security, disease, hunger, human rights, good governance and infrastructure development, to name but a few. Our vision puts the people first and is aimed at developing human capital and achieving inclusive growth. The OIC therefore fully recognizes the significance of the 2030 Agenda and endorses the promise that it holds for all people.

Conflicts, instability and the absence of peace and security are among the major constraints to development. People are always the first victims of each security threat and conflict situation. The multiplicity of such situations in and around the OIC member States necessitates a proactive role by the Organization of Islamic Cooperation in fostering peace and security at all levels, collectively or even independently. The OIC therefore envisions its role as an effective agent for peace and development in the Muslim world and beyond.

Our Organization is currently engaged in elaborating a successor programme to the 10-year programme of action that concludes in December 2015. It was the first major attempt to pursue a multidimensional agenda aimed at addressing the challenges faced by its member States in the intellectual, cultural, political, economic and development fields. The programme of action for the next decade (2016-2025), entitled "The OIC-2025 Programme of Action", is anchored in the provisions of the OIC Charter and focuses on 17 priority areas. They include the areas of peace and security, poverty alleviation, employment, infrastructure development, industrialization, simultaneous sustainability, inter-faith harmony, the empowerment of women, human rights, good governance, accountability and the like.

The United Nations recognizes the OIC as a strategic partner, and an elaborate OIC-United Nations cooperation mechanism is in place between the two organizations. The OIC is in the happy situation where it enjoys relationships with major international, intergovernmental and non-governmental bodies all over the world, including important non-member countries of the OIC. The OIC-2025 Programme and the 2030 Agenda reflect a great degree of complementarity in the goals and actions set forth by the two organizations. With an impressive record of active partnership between the two organizations, the OIC is in a unique position to play an important role

in promoting global partnerships and intensive global engagement, bringing together all stakeholders for the success of our collective journey.

The OIC-2025 Programme is our agenda for the next decade. It will chart a course for the work of the Organization and can complement global efforts aimed at the successful realization of the Goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda. Both organizations have a lot to offer to the people — hope for people under foreign occupation, for people in distress and for people facing deprivation, discrimination, injustice, poverty, disease and hunger. Together we shall work to ensure that the goals and actions that we are pursuing succeed in bringing about the much needed changes in the lives of our people. Every success, no matter how small, will add to the credibility of our efforts.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now hear a statement by the Secretary General of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

Mr. Zannier (Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe): There are milestones in history when universal values are translated into political commitments that change the course of events. The adoption of the visionary Charter of the United Nations 70 years ago was one of them. So was the Helsinki Final Act, ratified 40 years ago, which is the foundational document of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), pioneering a comprehensive concept of security embracing human rights and democracy, economics and the environment, as well as political and military aspects.

Today's gathering of world leaders and major stakeholders promises to be another such historic turning point — a turning point that regenerates hope, re-energizes action and reinvigorates partnerships. As the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1) is built around five pillars, peace, people, planet, prosperity and partnerships, I will structure my brief remarks in the same way, stressing the OSCE engagement in addressing each of them.

First, peace — we are convening at a critical time for global and regional security. Armed conflict is once again a reality on European soil, and divisions within the OSCE region are growing, undermining the very foundations of both European and international security. But we also face a range of new transnational threats, which are addressed in the 2030 Agenda.

The OSCE is, first and foremost, a security organization. Its comprehensive security concept offers effective tools for promoting sustainable development. As the 2030 Agenda reinforces the close relationship between peace, security and development, one of the major contributions of the OSCE to the implementation of the Agenda will be its enduring engagement in conflict prevention, conflict resolution and post-conflict rehabilitation. The OSCE will continue to serve as a platform for inclusive dialogue and cooperation around hard and soft security issues that have a direct impact on development.

The second shared priority is people. Ensuring lasting peace, democracy and stability for more than a billion people in our 57 participating States is a major OSCE objective. Achieving gender equality and empowering women form a cornerstone of our security approach, which seeks to protect and promote the human rights and dignity of women and men. The OSCE efforts to empower women and girls and to mainstream gender into policies and activities at both the State and the organizational levels are fully compliant with the new post-2015 development agenda.

The reality of international migration as a global phenomenon reminds us that we need to develop cooperative rights-based approaches so as to ensure that migration can continue to act as a powerful catalyst for development. Our approach features migration policy frameworks, including at the regional level, which are key ingredients. The OSCE can offer a platform for dialogue and provide expertise, drawing on our comprehensive and cross-dimensional security concepts.

The OSCE seeks also to foster peaceful and inclusive societies. We have developed specific tools and programmes tailored to help Governments address the root causes of intolerance and discrimination. We will continue to promote the values of acceptance, integration and tolerance for diversity.

That brings me to the third shared priority, our planet. The OSCE recognizes the two-way relationship between the environment and security, and we bring a security perspective to the international environmental discourse. The OSCE will support the accomplishments of some of the Sustainable Development Goals in its region. The Goals on water and climate change are primary examples. The OSCE will continue to facilitate cooperation among the parties and States that share

water resources. We will make full use of potential sources of supply through water diplomacy aimed at increasing security and stability in our region. We will strive to identify the security impacts of climate change in the local, national and regional contexts and to develop transboundary climate change adaptation strategies.

In more than nine weeks, the twenty-first Conference of Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change will convene, and hopes are high for a new global agreement. We will support the road to the Conference of Parties by organizing an OSCE Security Days: Climate Change and Security event devoted to climate change and security on 28 October at the OSCE headquarters in Vienna.

The OSCE will also continue to be a leader in promoting environmental democracy in our region. The OSCE-supported network of Aarhus Centres on environment and security, which now comprises 59 centres in 14 countries, provides tools for increasing access to information, public participation and access to justice in the sustainable development sphere and for increasing transparency and accountability and increasing engagement in promoting sustainable energy, disaster-risk reduction and the prevention of trafficking in hazardous waste, chemicals and wildlife, and will contribute to achieving those goals. By bringing together major energy-producing, transit and consuming countries, the OSCE will also continue to play a significant role in the development of a positive approach to energy security.

Our fourth shared priority is prosperity. Good economic governance, the rule of law and economic development are the prerequisites for peaceful and prosperous communities and nations. The OSCE's activities aimed at promoting international economic cooperation, enhancing the climate for business and investment, streamlining regulatory frameworks and countering corruption, money laundering and terrorism, will continue at an increasing pace as we support the implementation of the new Agenda.

Finally, the fifth shared priority is partnerships. We are not alone in all our endeavours. United in our common goal to ensure peace and security, the OSCE is joining efforts, first and foremost with the United Nations, but also with many other partner organizations, to forge effective responses to traditional and emerging challenges. The Environment and Security Initiative is a concrete example of that approach. Our lasting partnership with the United Nations Development Programme and other specialized United Nations agencies will continue to enable joint and coordinated action in support of the new 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

But we also need to move beyond that. We need to build strong partnerships, including with Governments, the private sector, the corporate world, financial institutions and civil society, to forge the strong coalition needed to implement our visionary but challenging new Agenda.

Achieving the goals of the new Agenda within the next 15 years will require major efforts on the part of all stakeholders, and those efforts will be made stronger by partnerships and cooperation. We have no time to waste. We must seize this opportunity and work together to bring peace and prosperity to people in every corner of our planet.

The Acting President: I now call on the Secretary General of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States.

Mr. Gomes (African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States): It is my honour to speak on behalf of the 79 States members of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of developing countries (ACP Group) to fully endorse the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1).

We are a unique group of States in our ecological, economic and sociocultural diversity, comprising 40 of the United Nations-classified least-developed countries, 37 of the 39 small island developing States (SIDS) and 41 middle-income countries. In that geostrategic space, the ACP Group encompasses the tropical forests of Central Africa and Amazonia and the oceans, marine and mineral resources that enable the globalized world of this twenty-first century to breathe clean air and ensure ocean travel for people, goods and services of all regions.

The goals of sustainable development and an equitable share in the wealth of planet Earth cannot be treated as mere documents and fine rhetoric by the peoples of the ACP Group. The commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), poverty eradication and the end of the disturbingly rapid increase of inequality, within and among nations, is not an option but an imperative for the ACP Group of

States, and we align ourselves with those who address those issues resolutely and systematically.

The ACP Group has pledged to strengthen the views and voices of developing countries in the growing call for a new, inclusive and people-centred multilateralism. Today, as the ACP Group of States, through the voices of the many heads of State and Government of our member States at the Assembly, we have reiterated that the goals and targets of sustainable development will be addressed within the strategic policy domains of the ACP Group through effective co-management with the European Development Fund and intra-ACP cooperation in the form of a comprehensive and coherent programme of action.

As stated in the preamble of the outcome document, entitled "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development", we are "resolved to free the human race from the tyranny of poverty and want and to heal and secure our planet." The ACP Group fully endorses that resolve in our programme of action and pledges to dedicate the comparative advantage and unique character of its tricontinental solidarity and experience, with special attention on the most vulnerable countries, in particular African countries, the least-developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States.

To that end, a road map for concrete action to realize the SDGs will be developed through an ACP forum on SIDS to assist in complementing the Samoa Pathway, and the coordination of South-South and triangular cooperation by the ACP Group as a facilitator and hub, and by upscaling the science, technology and innovation programmes of intra-ACP development cooperation in support of the technology facility mechanism launched at this Summit and by unreservedly promoting good governance, the rule of law, women's empowerment and gender equality in all our 79 member States. In pursuit of those noble ideals, the ACP Group joins the international community in a plan of action for people, planet and prosperity.

The Acting President: I now call on the Director General of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community.

Mr. Tukuitonga (Pacific Community): This is a momentous occasion for the Pacific Community, as it is the first time our organization is present here in its own right. As the organization's Director General, I am honoured to make this inaugural statement to such a distinguished audience.

For those who are not familiar with the Pacific Community, we are a science-, knowledge- and innovation-based development organization that has been supporting sustainable development in 22 Pacific island countries and territories since 1947, when the organization was known as the South Pacific Commission. The Pacific Community recognizes that such support must consider the changing development landscape at the national, regional and global levels. As a key institution in the regional architecture supporting Pacific islands and territories, our programmes reflect the strategic direction set out in the Framework for Pacific Regionalism led by the Pacific Islands Forum and the regional priorities identified in the Samoa Pathway.

Please allow me to congratulate the global community on the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) contained in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1). It is truly a historic achievement and a development milestone.

The year 2015 has presented an unprecedented opportunity to bring the countries and citizens of the world together to decide and embark on new paths to improve the lives of people everywhere. The decisions taken will determine the global course of action to end poverty, promote prosperity, improve health and well-being for all, protect the environment and address climate change. In 2015, the global community has adopted a new sustainable development agenda, and a new global agreement on climate change is expected in Paris later this year. Let me say at this point that the Sustainable Development Goals cannot, from our perspective, be realized without a binding agreement in Paris.

Our region's future prosperity and ability to effectively tackle the major challenges, such as climate change, poverty and non-communicable diseases (NCDs), depend on the drive, determination and quality of learning outcomes shown by decision-makers. Eradicating poverty requires a change of practice to refocus investments across sectors, support young people and engage and target vulnerable youth. That will ensure that we leave no one behind.

It is acknowledged that the Sustainable Development Goals are interlinked, but please allow me to put the challenge we face in our region into context. The starting point for us is very simple. The Pacific

small island developing States are spread over an area of approximately 36 million square kilometres, almost four times the size of China and 20 per cent larger than the African continent. Our area covers approximately 11 per cent of the world's water surface and 7 per cent of the total surface area of the Earth. It is the largest ecosystem on the planet. But only 1.5 per cent of that total area is land, with 98.5 per cent covered by water, a fact recognized by our leaders when they adopted the designation: large ocean States.

It is that vast ocean that joins the Pacific small island developing States together. It is the only resource that many of our island nations have access to, and Goal 14 is, therefore, of critical importance to our region. Healthy oceans are fundamental to resilience and sustainable development. That is critical in our region if we are to advance on all three pillars of sustainable development, namely, the economic, the social and the environmental. It is the main source of livelihoods for many of our people. It provides for food security, health and economic benefits. Therefore, the critical importance of conserving and sustainably managing and using the oceans, seas and marine resources is paramount. Achieving the targets enshrined in Goal 14 is fundamental.

Equally important is Goal 13, entitled "Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts". Our Pacific-island region contributes less than 0.03 per cent of the total world greenhouse-gas emissions, yet we are already suffering from the adverse effects of climate change. Failure to reach a legally binding agreement in Paris will further compromise the lives and livelihoods of our people.

Investing in young people requires a firm commitment to Goal 4, entitled "Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all". Education is a fundamental building block for sustainable development. While we have good access to education in the region, only 3 out of 10 young persons in school achieve the desirable and recommended literacy levels.

Given my background, it would be remiss of me not to speak about Goal 3, entitled "Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages". While that Goal is all encompassing, I would like to make a pitch for specific attention to non-communicable diseases, obesity, diabetes, heart disease and so on. A high proportion of the deaths caused by those diseases occur in low- and middle-income countries and to people well below the age of 60 years; those deaths are preventable at such an early age.

Around three quarters of all of the deaths in the Pacific small island developing States are due to NCDs; the majority occur to people in their most economically active age bracket, and for many others their capacity to contribute further to economic development is significantly reduced. The top 10 countries with the highest overweight and obesity rates in the world are Pacific small island developing States. Recognizing the huge economic costs of NCDs in the Pacific, the rising expenditure on NCDs comprises well over half of the total health budget of many small island countries.

As members will recall, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) had eight Goals, 18 targets and 60 indicators. The SDG agenda has more than double that — 17 Goals; 169 targets, a nearly ten-fold increase; and, at present, some 320-plus indicators, which, I note, are yet to be finalized. That is a huge increase, and it is imperative that they should be narrowed down to a more manageable set of global headline indicators that all countries worldwide can commit to regularly monitoring and reporting on.

In that context, I am proud to say that in our region we have made a start, which was recently communicated to the United Nations. Our sectoral experts, colleagues from all relevant technical intergovernmental organizations, have come up with a list of 62 regional headline indicators that we believe would do justice to an effective monitoring regime of the SDGs in our region. Matching these draft Pacific SDG indicators against the current draft list of 82 tier 1 indicators proposed by the United Nations for consideration by the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators in Bangkok next month shows an overlap of nearly 50 per cent. In other words, for us to commit to our own regional requirements, plus all currently global tier 1 indicators, we would be looking at a set of 116 indicators. That is still nearly double the current MDG total, but only around a third of the currently proposed total of 320.

Whatever the final outcome of the SDG Inter-Agency and Expert Group deliberations, it goes without saying that the volume of additional data collection will be substantial for small island developing States, in fact for most developing nations, and would require a massive global investment in that area, as stressed by many

countries and organizations at the third International Conference on Financing for Development in Addis Ababa in July. Without due consideration of that reality, I am afraid most of us will be doomed to fail in our responsibilities to monitor and report reliably on our progress in implementing the comprehensive SDG agenda.

It is a great honour for me to share the Pacific Community's perspective with the Assembly at this Summit. Our longevity and standing, as the Pacific region's principal scientific and technical development organization, is only possible through the unity of our members; the dedication of our staff; the support of the Pacific people and our principal development partners; and the strength, commitment and warmth of truly durable and genuine partnerships.

The Acting President: I now call on the Executive Director of the International Trade Centre.

Ms. González (International Trade Centre): We know why we are here. We know what is at stake. The new global agenda has the potential to set us on track towards a future of equality and opportunities for the billions of women, men and young people who have not shared fully in our rising prosperity. That inclusive future must be greener or it will not happen, since business as usual on the environmental front will exact terrible economic and social costs, especially from the poorest.

Adopting the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1) was a first step. Translating the promise of those marching orders into reality will demand determined policies. It will require fundamental changes in the way the private sector does business. We, as individual consumers, will also have to make more responsible decisions. Implementing the Agenda will ultimately lead to incredible economic and human savings, but there will be up-front costs. Leveraging every cent of aid, tax revenue and private investment for maximal development impact will take a strong partnership between Governments, business and civil society, working together with the United Nations. And we will need innovation. The low-carbon transition will be incomplete, unless it extends access to energy to the more than 1 billion people who still rely on wood for heat and light.

But delivering on the 2030 Agenda is not just about finding new ways to do things. It is also about capitalizing on what we already know to be effective. That is why it is so heartening to see that the new Agenda recognizes trade as an engine for development. As we work to eradicate extreme poverty by 2030, we will be building on three decades that have seen the fastest poverty reduction in history. The growth that lifted hundreds of millions of people out of poverty across large sections of the developing world had much to do with trade. It also had much to do with engagement in a more open global economy.

The countries that have shared the least in the recent human development gains — the countries that have fallen short on poverty reduction — are precisely those that have remained on the margins of international production networks. To put it simply, trading in value-added goods and services matters for development. A global economy in which no country languishes on the sidelines or remains locked into exporting unprocessed raw materials will be better placed to offer productive employment opportunities for all.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development will catalyse new thinking and funds aimed at meeting the Sustainable Development Goals. I am delighted that some of that ingenuity will now be directed towards inclusiveness in trade, towards objectives such as doubling the share of the least developed countries in world trade, towards promoting economic diversification, towards promoting the economic empowerment of women, who still represent half of the population of this planet, and, critically, towards accurately measuring the effectiveness of our interventions.

The Agenda calls for opening trade, for farm and fishery subsidy reforms and for a strengthened multilateral trading system anchored firmly in the World Trade Organization. It directly links Aid for Trade to the goal of full and productive employment for all. Trade is not an end in itself — it is a road towards growth and development. It is an enabler of progress across the entire Agenda and, in particular, an approach to the goals of creating jobs and reducing inequalities.

Small and medium-sized enterprises are a vital link to making growth inclusive. Small and medium-sized enterprises account for the majority of jobs in virtually all countries. Keeping up with population growth will require the world to generate an additional 500 million jobs by 2030. In many places, those jobs will mean the difference between a demographic dividend and a

social time bomb. And the lion's share of those jobs will be generated by small and medium-sized enterprises.

When small and medium-sized enterprises are able to access finance, when they are able to build trade capacity and skills, when they are empowered to become more competitive and connect to international markets — in a nutshell, when small and medium-sized enterprises trade — they generate more and better jobs across a broad cross-section of countries' work forces. When they are run by women, the dividends are even richer.

As we turn our minds to making this ambitious Agenda a reality, let us think about how to integrate small and medium-sized enterprises in developing countries more fully into the global division of labour. Let us empower them and transform them into the engines of growth that they can be. The International Trade Centre is the Assembly's partner in that endeavour. We are honoured to be part of this new chapter in our collective history.

The Acting President: I now call on the Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme.

Mr. Clos (United Nations Human Settlements Programme): I am honoured to congratulate representatives for their diligence in formulating the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1), including the inspirational Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) contained therein.

The United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) welcomes the progress that has been made since the adoption of the Millennium Development Goals and the increasing recognition of the vital role of urbanization in achieving sustainable development. That role is reflected strongly in Sustainable Development Goal 11 to make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.

The world is rapidly urbanizing. Today, over half the global population lives in urban areas, which will accommodate an additional 3 billion people by 2050 — 70 per cent of the world's population. Most of that growth will take place in developing countries. Cities are engines of growth and job creation. They are responsible for 70 per cent of the global gross domestic product today. When they are well planned, well governed and well financed, cities can drive national economic growth. Indeed, no country has ever reached middle-income status without proper urbanization.

It is critical to understand that good urbanization is not a passive outcome of growth. It is a driver of growth. When endogenous resources are unlocked, a positive cycle of investment in infrastructure and services is unleashed. Urbanization always generates economic value, although its value and costs are not always equally shared. However, the advantages of urbanization are not guaranteed. Without appropriate legislation, good urban planning and adequate financial design, cities can fail their populations. The problem that we face nowadays is that most of the new urbanization is spontaneous and unplanned. Therefore, instead of positive outcomes, new urbanization often yields negative externalities, such as congestion, sprawl and segregation.

Good urbanization does not come by chance. It comes by design. Three common measures underlie the wide diversity of human settlements.

First, adequate rules and regulations, which govern people living close together and sharing common services.

Secondly, better spatial planning and design in urban planning, which optimize density, connectivity and diversity.

Thirdly, a financial plan, which sustains the functioning of the city and ensures economic prosperity.

Those three measures cannot be achieved through sectoral policies alone. Only the collective government of a city can effectively oversee its common elements, including public space. Local governments therefore have a pre-eminent role to play. They are at the level closest to the people, to whom they also have the greatest accountability. Local government also needs support from higher levels of Government, through frameworks such as national urban policies and the adequate empowerment of local authorities.

No sustainable development can occur without sustainable urban development. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1) recognizes the power of urbanization to transform the current paradigm. And it gives cities a clear role to play in that transformation. In Paris this December, at the 2015 Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP21), an agreement on climate change is expected to point

the way toward implementing one part of the Agenda, including the requisite commitments and resources. Here too, cities have a role to play, not only as contributors to, and victims of, climate change, but in providing potential solutions.

Next year, in October 2016, the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) will be held in Quito, Ecuador. It will be the first global summit following the adoption of the 2030 Agenda and, hopefully, a new climate agreement at COP21. Its preparatory process has already opened a debate and engagement around the world about how we should build, plan and manage cities and achieve sustainable urbanization. Another important debate is taking place on how local, regional and national Governments should be involved in an action-oriented implementation. A broad base is forming to bring about a successful outcome in 2016: a new urban agenda that will guide us in the coming decades.

The Acting President: I now call on the Council Member of the International Forum of Non-Governmental Organizations Platforms in Seychelles.

Mr. Lalande (International Forum of Non-Governmental Organizations Platforms in Seychelles): The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), contained in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1), are ambitious goals meant to address global challenges in an era when we are confronted with unprecedented difficulties and challenges. Many people are relying on us to make decisions that will make a significant difference to their lives.

The International Forum of Non-Governmental Organizations Platforms reaffirms its hope for the successful implementation of the SDGs. Now is the time to move from policy to action. The ongoing battle to eradicate poverty and injustice across the globe must be intensified in the implementation phase of the SDGs. We all need to focus on engaging in consistent and long-term collaborative approaches and complementary stakeholder partnerships mobilizing local authorities, civil-society organizations, academia, media and the private sector. We must demonstrate to our people that the SDGs are not only fancy goals on paper, but are a clear road map which can be successfully achieved.

Accountability mechanisms must be built on democratic standards and include citizen-based initiatives. Substantial financial resources need to be committed and the monitoring and accountability frameworks strengthened, so that the promises we make to our people today can be realized tomorrow. The Seychelles, for example, is one of the developing countries that has been identified as having met most of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and I have the honour to sit on its national MDG Steering Committee, which has brought together various sectors. The Seychelles MDG Steering Committee proved useful in synergizing the efforts of the country's development actors from the local to the national levels. We recommend that such an inclusive and democratic mechanism, which includes Government, the private sector, civil society and other stakeholders' representatives, be established in all countries and adequately steered and resourced. We strongly believe that sustainable development, inclusion, peace and human rights can be achieved only if actors and strong and inclusive institutions at the local level are the backbone of the implementation of the SDGs.

The day will come when we shall review the success of the SDGs. In support of making the implementation of the SDGs a success, we reaffirm the following points. They are: the centrality of peoples' active engagement, the need for a renewed mandate for institutions and experts to serve local populations, the need to support the democratization of societies and realize human rights at all levels, the importance of building peace and preventing conflicts as a precondition to sustainable development, and the imperative to mobilize predictable and substantial resources.

Ownership by the people and people's active engagement must be at the core of the shift from policy to action. This new way of implementing the SDGs will require a deep and radical paradigm shift on the part of most of our organizations and institutions. The saying in Créole, "*L'unité fait la force*" — which means "strength in unity" — should be the driving force when implementing the SDGs. Future generations will judge our SDG implementation efforts against the criteria of inclusivity, engagement and participation. Let us therefore rise to the level of people's aspirations.

The Acting President: I now call on the President of the World Farmers' Organization.

Ms. Nguleka (World Farmers' Organization): I am greatly honoured to have the privilege of standing before this gathering today and of addressing this important Assembly on behalf of the farmers of the world. More than 1.5 billion farmers all over the world are part of the 3.2 billion people living in rural communities. Those groups of farmers wake up every morning, every day, making sure that we have not only food, but also nutrition. By doing so, the farmers of this world make sure that the planet is safe.

I would also like to state that the community of farmers welcomes the process leading up to the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals. We would like the United Nations to know that, as farmers and members of the major groups, we are delighted that we participated in the preparation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The streamlining of all sectors and major groups helped us not only to participate, but also to be heard. It has given the world community of farmers to be heard and represented at the international level.

Farmers all over the world — and that includes fishermen and cattle-breeders — represent one of the main stakeholders of society. We have a social and economic responsibility. The farmers of this world take care not only of the food that we eat, but also of the lands, rivers and oceans; they take care of the environment. In the process, farmers always adapt to the evolution of the climate. Farmers provide food and nutrition. And one thing that is mostly overlooked is that farmers also create local jobs for their communities. Simply stated, farmers work every day in making the planet more sustainable.

That is the reason why the farmers of this world are committed to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1). Although only one Goal is directly related to agriculture, as farmers we believe and know that, with a lot of help, we can facilitate the accomplishment of all 17 Goals. Therefore, we see ourselves as major stakeholders in the accomplishment of those strategic Goals.

Farmers are economic stakeholders, farmers are economic actors. We are not hobbyists, and farming is not a lifestyle. I know that this might come as a surprise to some, but farmers are also people who want to make a profit in what they do. Farmers all over the world contribute to economic development and the gross domestic produc' of their countries.

Since yesterday, we have all heard the slogans "Moving together as one" and "Leaving no one behind". I believe that if farmers are unable to make any profits and their ventures continue to be unprofitable, they will be left behind. It is therefore very important for us to have very inclusive and strong partnerships between the Governments and the private sector so that we can run together to ensure that the Sustainable Development Goals are implemented and that the planet is more sustainable.

The 2030 Agenda will not be effective unless those targets are carefully monitored. Farmers' organizations from all over the world will make their fundamental contributions to the realization of the so-called data revolution — the gathering of more and more precise statistical information on agriculture that is normally based on ethnicity, gender and legal statistics from the different countries where we are based. That is what is going to help us measure the progress in the implementation of the SDGs.

Farmers have some demands to make if we are to be able to support the implementation of the SDGs. The first is access to knowledge and skills. If we are to be able to continuously improve agricultural sustainability, we also need investment in education and capacity-building because that will yield a lasting return. Farmers need the opportunity to acquire the appropriate knowledge to become entrepreneurs. That is because the economic dimension of sustainable development is as important as the social and environmental ones.

In conclusion, on behalf of the farmers of the world, I would like to pledge that farmers stand ready to contribute their expertise and are committed to ensuring that the SDGs are fulfilled. We look forward to the opportunity to participate in the implementation, the monitoring process and the evaluation of the 2030 Agenda.

The Acting President: I shall now call on those representatives who wish to speak in exercise of the right of reply. May I remind members that statements in the exercise of the right of reply are limited to 10 minutes for the first intervention and to five minutes for the second intervention, and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Kazhoyan (Armenia): I apologize for asking for the floor at this late hour, but unfortunately I have to address some of the remarks made by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan.

Yesterday and today, we witnessed two magnificent days in this Hall, and we are looking forward to tomorrow, when the 193 States Members of the United Nations will come together for a historic cause to take one more step towards the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda and the implementation of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). These are historic days and this is a historic move, and I am surprised that a delegation should be willing to spoil the fun and glory of these days.

Goal 16 of the SDGs is dedicated to the promotion of peaceful societies for sustainable development. Truly, Azerbaijan has experienced economic growth, but the income from that economic growth, unfortunately, has not gone entirely to sustain development for peace and prosperity in the region, but has been invested in arms deals. It is most surprising that the country has boosted its military expenditures twenty fold. Instead of investing to fulfil the development goals — the SDGs or the Millennium Development Goals — the country is militarizing beyond any possible reason or logic.

The data that was presented in the statement of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan cites a figure of around 1 million refugees in the country. I am really surprised and would suggest that the Minister check some of his data in the official database. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) states on its official website that the number of refugees residing in Azerbaijan is 1,299. The number of refugees originating from Azerbaijan is 10,521. Most have come to Armenia from Azerbaijan. There are 394 people seeking asylum in Azerbaijan and 4,402 seeking asylum in countries other than Azerbaijan. That is the only official data contained in the UNHCR database. The database makes no mention of 1 million.

It is not surprising to hear more and more lies from this delegation, which is accusatory, abusing its position at the rostrum and trying to provoke and instigate, while it says nothing about Azerbaijan's own problems or responsibilities. Yes, refugees have the right to return to their homes, but who said that only Azerbaijani refugees have the right to do so? What about the Armenian refugees who had to flee their homes, their villages and their towns as a result of massacres, pogroms and persecution by the Azerbaijani Government? Do they not have the same right? I do believe that no differentiation can be made based on race or ethnicity; refugees have the right to return to their homes, their place of residence.

If the Azerbaijani Minister is sincere in his willingness for refugees to return to their homes, he should negotiate sincerely with the Armenian delegation and his Armenian counterpart in order to find a peaceful solution to the Nagorno Karabakh conflict, which would also enable the return of each and every refugee to their homes. If only that were his sincere wish.

Mr. Musayev (Azerbaijan): It is unfortunate that the representative of Armenia has once again used our debate to make groundless propagandistic statements. In reality, we have witnessed yet another unsuccessful attempt by that Member State to mislead the international community by means of falsification. I would like to briefly comment on what the representative of Armenia preferred to pass over in silence and what he deliberately distorted.

First, the fact that military force was used against Azerbaijan, and that the armed forces of Armenia seized and continue to occupy the territories of Azerbaijan, including the Nagorno Karabakh region and the seven surrounding districts, has been well demonstrated and requires no additional comments.

Secondly, through the relevant Security Council and General Assembly resolutions and documents adopted by other international organizations, the international community has consistently deplored and condemned in the strongest terms the use of military force against Azerbaijan and the resulting occupation of its territories, thereby reaffirming the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and the inviolability of its internationally recognized borders, and demanding the immediate, complete and unconditional withdrawal of the Armenian forces from all the occupied territories of Azerbaijan. It would be useful if the delegation of Armenia could read those documents carefully.

Thirdly, in the course of its aggression Armenia has carried out ethnic cleansing of the areas it seized by expelling about 1 million Azerbaijanis from their homes and has committed other serious crimes during the conflict. Thus, in its relevant resolutions the Security Council has specifically condemned the attacks on civilians and bombardments of inhabited areas within Azerbaijan. In its 2010 judgement, the European Court of Human Rights arrived at an important conclusion qualifying the offences of the invading Armenian troops against Azerbaijani civilians as acts of particular

gravity that amount to war crimes and crimes against humanity.

Fourthly, Armenia has established an ethnically constructed, subordinate, separatist entity on the occupied territories of Azerbaijan that are under its total political, military and financial dependence and control. The European Court of Human Rights clearly confirmed this in its judgement of 16 June 2015. The Government of Armenia, which has purged both the territory of its own country and the occupied territories of Azerbaijan of all non-Armenians, and thereby succeeded in creating monoethnic cultures there, should be the last to speak about such notions as peace, human rights and self-determination. Armenia continues to pursue an unconstructive position on the negotiations, and takes actions aimed at destabilizing the situation on the ground, derailing the peace process and ultimately consolidating the status quo of occupation.

The Armenian side regularly and deliberately violates the ceasefire by attacking and killing Azerbaijani military personnel and civilians residing in the territories adjacent to the front lines. In recent times, such violations and armed provocations have become increasingly frequent and violent.

Finally, in reality, by disregarding the demands of the international community, by continuing to occupy the territories of Azerbaijan, by deliberately denying the right of around a million Azerbaijani refugees and internally displaced persons to return to their homes, by pursuing racist ideology and by misinterpreting the fundamental norms and principles of international law, Armenia clearly demonstrates who is actually responsible for undermining regional peace, security and stability.

Mr. Kazhoyan (Armenia): I have always admired the enormous possibilities that language offers to humankind. Language has enabled human beings to express thoughts, expressions and ideas. It has also been used in fairy tales and legends. One does not need to listen to the accusations and allegations that were just made; one simply needs to read the newspapers going back 20 years. Who, what, when and how did the whole thing start? Who was the first to attack? Who was the invader?

I do believe it was Azerbaijan that attacked the peaceful people of Nagorno Karabakh, who simply wanted to be independent from Azerbaijan — from the Soviet Azerbaijan. In fact, throughout its history, Nagorno Karabakh has never been part of Azerbaijan since the history of Nagorno-Karabakh is clearly thousands of years longer than that of Azerbaijan. There is no way that Azerbaijan has any right whatsoever to Nagorno Karabakh. The people of Nagorno Karabakh expressed their right to be independent and, because of their willingness to be independent, they were attacked, slaughtered and massacred. So they decided to be separate from a country that was willing to kill them.

There is definitely no need to cite a Security Council resolution because such resolutions call upon Azerbaijan as well to stop the fighting and to stop killing people, which continues to this day. Just yesterday the Azerbaijan military shelled the Armenian border and the Nagorno Karabakh border. Is this not being perpetrated by a country that is speaking about some sort of justice?

I believe that the Azerbaijan delegation, before speaking out and mixing fantasy with reality, before bringing up legend instead of history, should take a look at its own history, especially its recent history, and remember who started the whole mess. If peace is what is desired, then one has to live peacefully. If war is brought to one's neighbour, war will be the result and more regions will be lost.

That was how the whole thing happened. Nagorno Karabakh wanted to be independent. In order to secure its borders and its peaceful population from the shelling of the Azerbaijani army, they needed to seal a security perimeter around Nagorno Karabakh proper. That is how the whole thing happened. It will continue like that unless Azerbaijan comes to the negotiating table and is truly and strongly committed to finding a solution. Otherwise, these rights of reply will continue endlessly. I do not think that this is the proper place, time or occasion for exchanges such as this.

Mr. Musayev (Azerbaijan): The remarks just made by the representative of Armenia, full of the usual distortions and misinterpretations, demonstrate how that Member State is far from even thinking about engaging in a constructive search for peace. In fact, the delegation of Armenia has not introduced anything new, and has once again abused its right to speak from the high rostrum of the United Nations. As a result, we have heard irrelevant and out-of-context comments that obviously fail to respond to our arguments.

We regret that Armenia, instead of contributing to the ongoing conflict-settlement process, gives preference to provocations and escalation with unpredictable consequences. Such a stance on the part of Armenia represents an open challenge to the conflict-settlement process and a serious threat to international and regional peace and security. The earlier the leadership of Armenia realizes the lack of any prospects for success of its destructive political agenda, the sooner our peoples will be able to enjoy the benefits of peace, stability and cooperation.

The meeting rose at 10.25 p.m.